

Goblin Kingdom

Arc 2: The Distant Paradise

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Translation Group: [Neo Translations](#)

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Character Introduction (Raid Arc)

Humans

Reshia Fel Zeal (17 years-old)

The priestess known as the saint. As the Healing Goddess' follower, she lives to spread the word and teach righteousness. She has the divine protection of the goddess, and can heal others.

Lili (21 years-old)

She studied the famous sword style, Zweil Style, in the capital. She has sworn fealty to Reshia. And while she may have lost to the protagonist in one hit, she has proven herself strong enough to easily defeat three normal goblins.

Mattis (26 years-old)

The second son of a farmer. He's largely responsible for drying the meat to preserve them.

Chinos (24 years-old)

The third son of a farmer. He plows the fields and is close to Mattis.

Keifel (28 years-old)

An adventurer who took on a request to escort Reshia through the Forest of Darkness. He's strong enough that he could easily wield a steel great sword, but the protagonist still managed to kill him.

Zeon (32 years-old)

A follower of Ativ. He specializes in fire magic. In his battle against the protagonist, he used his fire magic, but still lost. In the end, he tried to blow himself up along with the protagonist, but the protagonist's words agitated him, causing him to lose the opportunity.

Tinra (23 years-old)

A villager. She is one of the women used by the goblins as a breeding machine that the protagonist killed.

Ashtal Do Germion (59 years-old)

The king that rules the western region of the continent in which the Forest of

Darkness and the connecting borders are included. He is a powerful ruler with seven holy knights under him. He has recently ordered three of those holy knights to search for the saint.

Gowen Ranid (45 years-old)

The feudal lord that rules over the region next to the Forest of Darkness. As one of the country's strongest powers, he is renowned as the Iron-Armed Knight. He is currently leading his soldiers in a quest to find the saint.

Gulland Rifenin (31 years-old)

A former adventurer. As one of the country's strongest powers, he is renowned as the Storm Knight. He'd been stationed in the northern mountains, but the king called him back to send him off in a quest for the saint.

Gene Marlon (24 years-old)

As one of the country's strongest powers, he is renowned as Lightning-Fast Knight. He was previously stationed at the south, but the king called him back to send him on a quest to search for the saint. Killing is his favorite past-time. Whether it's a man, a demihuman or a monster, they're all just pieces of meat to be cut down before him.

Herculean Wyatt (40 years-old)

A member of the Blood Oath of the Flying Swallow. He specializes in handling great shields. He has a gentle personality, but beware for his anger isn't one to be taken lightly.

Mage Killer Mill (19 years-old)

A member of the Blood Oath of the Flying Swallow. She is an assassin that favors the use of talons. Renowned as the mage killer, she is a mage's worst nightmare.

Wand of Destruction Bellan (37 years-old)

A member of the Blood Oath of the Flying Swallow. He wields a fire staff. As a former knight, he cares a great deal about honor.

Hawk-Eyed Fick (31 years-old)

An adventurer with two names. He has exceptional perception and skill. He is currently searching through the Forest of Darkness under Gulland's lead.

The White Hand of Life (Previously translated as divine hands) (Age Unknown)

A priest robed in white. She specializes in healing and support. Her age, name, and origin are all unknown.

Vitz (25 years-old)

A talkative sword-wielding adventurer. He's actual strength isn't bad, but he's still far from being deserving of a second name.

Yugil (26 years-old)

An adventurer and an unwilling shield bearer. He might appear old, but he is actually still young.

Yoshu (26 years-old)

The younger brother of the slaves Gene purchased. The collar of obedience around his neck keeps him from going against Gene's orders. Healers are rare, so he's been made into a shield bearer.

Shumea (28 years-old)

The older sister of the slaves Gene purchased. The collar of obedience around her neck keeps her from going against Gene's orders. Contrast to her brother who bears a shield, she uses a spear.

Household of the Gods

Altesia.

The Goddess of the Underworld and the Goddess of Valor. As the goddess the snakes serve, she has given her blessing to the protagonist. She is a dangerous woman with her deep jealousy and fierce temperament.

Zenobia

The Goddess of Healing. She has given her blessing to Reshia. She has also warned the protagonist to protect her. Altesia might hate her, but she doesn't feel the same way toward Altesia.

Pitch Black (Verid)

A one-eyed red-eyed snake that belongs to the Goddess of the Underworld.

Twin-Headed Snake

Known to the goblins as the Lord of Decay. He is one of the snakes that fought the world with the Goddess of the Underworld.

Others

Selena

The elven woman Gene purchased. She became a slave after running away from her tribe.

Hasu

A high kobold. She is one of the protagonist's pets.

The protagonist managed to tame her by giving her orc corps and other meat as bait.

She is a fortuitous kobold who somehow managed to become the leader of her pack.

Cynthia

As the pup of the gray wolves, she has been given the elven name that means lady of the lake. Reshia, Lili, and other children and women are quite taken by her lovely fur.

Gastra

As the pup of the gray wolves, he has been given the name of a wise human monarch that means sovereign of the wind's howls. His uninhibited personality leads him to battle Hasu for ranks on a daily basis.

Bui

A timid orc. Gol Gol had taken a liking for him despite his small body. After Gol Gol died, he led the orcs to the west, but the protagonist managed to capture them.

Gol Gol

The orc king that attacked the village. He is a berserker who can use skills. He was defeated by the protagonist.

Skill Summary

Status	
Race	Goblin
Level	1
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Swordsmanship A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv1); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King Bui (Lv40)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos

- Charm towards tribal goblins (HIGH)
- The abilities of goblins under your rule are increased. (MEDIUM)
- The effect of the charm on a subordinate will wear off upon their death unless the goblin is an adherent.

World Devouring Howl

- If the target is of a lower class, spells and magic can be interrupted.
- AoE Radius of 500m

Swordsmanship A-

- Sword skill just a step away from the apex.

Dominator

- Increases the maximum population that can be ruled (HIGH).
- Charm toward species other than goblins (LOW)

—Directives to those directly under you are absolute.

Ruler's Wisdom III

—When engaging the enemy's leader, damage received and dealt are increased.

—When dueling, if both parties have named themselves and are using the same weapon then strength, agility, magic power, and defense will all rise.

—When dueling, if the opposing party is defeated without killing him, then charm toward him will increase (MEDIUM).

The King's Dance at the Edge of Death

—Deal double the damage incurred to the enemy.

Soul of the Berserk King

—Increased resistance against mental attacks (HIGH)

—When dueling the damage received is reduced while the damage inflicted is increased.

—The mind will incur heavy mental damage while the skill is active, but in exchange, the damage incurred will be reduced and the damage dealt will increase.

Blessing of the Underworld Goddess

—Charm toward those who have received her divine protection (MEDIUM)

—Hate from those with the light attribute (LOW)

—Charm toward those with the darkness attribute (LOW)

Blessing of the one-eyed snake

—Stamina regeneration (MEDIUM)

—Ether is easier to control

Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

—Stamina regeneration while fighting in the Fortress of the Abyss (HIGH)

—Stamina regeneration while fighting in the Forest of Darkness (LOW)

—The growth rate of the goblins under your leadership (LOW)

For example, the Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos gives an increased charm of (HIGH).

The (HIGH) here indicates the degree of effect of the skill because it is a passive skill, a skill that is always working.

Let's look at another skill. The skill Martial Barrier has the chance of ignoring damage incurred (MEDIUM) while also passively increasing defense (HIGH) at the cost of increasing the strain on the body (MEDIUM).

In this case, the (MEDIUM) of the first effect affects the probability of the temporary invincibility as it is an active skill, a skill that activates once in a while and is not always active. For reference: (LOW) 10-30% (MEDIUM) 40-60% (HIGH)70-90%.

To sum it up, remarkable skills such as this one which can render an attack meaningless has a chance of failing. But, in the end, whether a skill is strong or weak on paper, their actual effect will depend on the one using them.

Intermission: Attack I

Status

Name	Gi De
Race	Goblin
Level	34
Class	Rare
Possessed Skills	Swordsmanship C-; Overpowering Howl; Omnivorous; A Monster's Feelings; Beast Tamer; Instinct
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None

The sun shone from high above the sky.

Gi Ga was practicing hard today too. Though he has gotten much better now, as he rarely falls off, and can even properly direct the rider-beast to go where he wants.

Even though one of his legs is fake, he can somehow straddle the rider-beast and even swing his spear, albeit somewhat weaker than when on foot.

With the reins of the beast on one hand and a spear on the other, Gi Ga rode through the forests on the back of the black tiger known as Hakuou.

—Found you.

Prowling the forest in search of a prey, Gi Ga set his sights on a lone double-head. He pulled on the reins as he lightly kicked the black tiger, and as the black tiger’s instincts woke, they bolted through the forest. The double-head caught wind of their charge, and it ran for its life. It knew its place as the prey. There was no winning against one’s predator, so it ran without a second thought.

Passing through the trees, the double-head ran for its life despite the hard rocky road. But the black tiger was no green horn to hunting, and neither was the goblin on its back. They were both veterans of the hunt, and they caught up in no time. Gi Ga stretched out his long arm, and attacked the double-head, slowing it down, giving chance for the black tiger to finish it off. Like that the

short game of cat and mouse came to an end.

“You’ve already mastered riding Hakuou, I see.” The Paradua goblin who came here as a messenger, Alashd, nodded in satisfaction.

“Only because of your excellent teaching, Lord Alashd.” Gi Ga gratefully said as he sheathed his spear into the saddle’s sheath.

“If you’re this good now, then I think I’ll be able to return at ease.”

“When will you be departing?”

“Tomorrow eve. It won’t take five days with the black tiger’s strong legs, but it would still be best to leave soon.”

“The days will be lonely, Lord Alashd. At the very least, let us see you off with a feast.” Gi Ga pointed to the double-head he’d just hunted.

“Then I’d like some of those dried meat of yours. They’re quite delicious.”

“It’ll be my pleasure.”

Alashd fastened the double-head to his mount, and the two of them rode side-by-side back to the Gi Village.



The beast tamer, Gi De, was growing anxious as the kobolds haven’t contacted them since yesterday.

“What’s the matter?” The water mage, Gi Zo, asked upon noticing Gi De’s unusual behavior. Gi Zo excelled at water magic even among the druids of Gi Za’s village, so Gi Za and the king expected much from him.

Gi Ga Rax and Gi Zo were the two goblins in charge of the Gi Village, so when Gi Zo inquired for the source of Gi De’s unrest, he readily reported the lack of contact with the kobolds.

“No contact, with kobold. Anxious, me.”

Even the king’s very own subordinate beast who would pester them for food hadn’t shown itself in the past two days.

“Have they found a way to procure food themselves?”

It was hard to believe that that gluttonous kobold would just up and go. Something bad must've happened, Gi De thought, and his grim countenance grew even grimmer.

"Me, worried. I'll, look."

"Very well. I shall consult with Lord Gi Ga on my end."

"Thank you."

Gi Zo knew that the kobolds' eyes that the king left was a crucial line of defense against the orcs and the humans. The orcs have been behaving all this time but it was best to be safe. Gi De himself did not understand this, but he knew instinctively that the kobolds' lack of contact was not a good thing. And so, he headed east with his triple boar.

Meanwhile, Gi Zo himself became thoughtful.

"Have the orcs rebelled?"

Rather than a human invasion, the first thing to come to mind was an orc rebellion. After all, they were enemies just not long ago. The short time spent in peace was not enough to wash away the memories of Gol Gol's raid.

"Why the sour face? Did something happen?" The goblin that was almost like a disciple to Gi Ga, Gi Da, asked when he noted Gi Zo's sour countenance.

"Actually..."

Gi Da scratched his head when he heard Gi Zo's story.

"I see where you're coming from, but I can't imagine those orcs rebelling."

Though they might once they've gotten strong enough, he added.

"Regardless, please send word for the normal goblins to gather at the village. We have plenty of food stockpiled, so it should be fine to halt our hunts and focus on keeping watch until the kobolds bring word."

After Gi Da bowed, Gi Zo went to the king's house. He had to explain the situation to the king's treasures, the humans. Gi Ga was the one truly in charge of the village, but he was out. So, the responsibility would then fall to Gi Zo's shoulders.

“I hope nothing bad happens.”

As a foreboding chill touched upon him, he looked grimly to the eastern sky.



With the triple boar at the lead, Gi De travelled to the kobold’s village with his subordinates and their wild dogs.

Half the day passed until he finally neared the kobolds’ village, and the uneasiness he felt stirred even stronger. Then the triple boar and the wild dog started growling.

“Is, someone, there?”

Gi De walked as cautiously as he could while the dogs were set loose to all four directions. Then when one of the wild dogs found something and started growling, one of Gi De’s subordinates, a normal goblin, shushed the dog as he took a peek at the dog’s discovery. He then ran up to Gi De with a look of shock on his face.

“What, happened?”

“Humans, came, lots of humans.”

Gi De passed by the shaking goblin to confirm his findings through the thickets. And when he did, he could not believe his eyes.

“...What in, the world...”

Crowds of men dressed in armor cut the trees and dug the ground, whittling the forest in their path. Gi De did not not understand why these men were here. What he did know was that these men came here to destroy their land.

But fighting now was a fool’s errand. There were far too many of them. In fact, they outnumbered even the orcs.

“We, must inform, Lord Gi Ga...”

Gi De turned on his heels as he grit his teeth.

“Going so soon?”

But then a voice fell upon his ears. A cold voice unfit for the situation at hand, which brought Gi De an unprecedented sense of crisis. The owner of that voice

appeared before him.

“Gotta hand it over to Gulland. That ruckus really did attract some prey.”

“Just kill them already, and let’s have a feast.”

“All this anger I have pent up need to go somewhere after all. These guys can take the place of those blasted orcs.”

Three adventurers approached him with the Wand of Destruction, Bellan, in tow.

“GURUuRURU...”

One of the adventurers became thoughtful at Gi De’s growls.

“This thing is a horde chief? Sure is rare to see a beast tamer lead one,” one of the adventurers said.

“Well, there are a lot of odd ones lately. From kobolds to orcs, so it’s not really that weird anymore,” another adventurer said.

“Who cares, just kill ’em already. If you don’t hurry up, the other teams will get the points,” insisted the third of the bunch.

That’s true, the other adventurers nodded. Then the three of them prepared to face Gi De.

Gi De himself was only a rare goblin, but he had no intention of losing to either the water mage, Gi Zo, or the spearman, Gi Da.

Those who hunted frequently develop a sort of sixth sense. A sense that allowed Gi De to see the difference in strength between him and his foe. No, to be more precise, he couldn’t help but see that difference. For his instincts as a beast screamed at him from within. He couldn’t win. This was the indisputable difference between the hunted and the hunter, the predator and the pray. Which is also why Gi De himself hadn’t attacked when the three adventurers were casually talking among themselves.

There was no other choice.

“...Well that’s how it is. Don’t take it personally?” The Wand of Destruction, Bellan who hadn’t spoken a word until now, violently declared.

“Scatter!!”

When the Wand of Destruction, Bellan, stepped out, Gi De charged toward him with his triple boar.

“Nu.”

“Tch!?”

When the triple boar hit Bellan, he charged out again toward another adventurer. The rest of the goblins used this opportunity to run back to the village.

“Cheeky bastards!”

“You’re not going anywhere!”

The other two adventurers chased after the normal goblins, but the goblins were much faster when moving through the forest. Magic came shooting at them from behind, and one died, but the rest of them were able to safely escape.

“...So you used yourself as a decoy to let the others go.” Bellan had sent Gi De flying after he charged into him. And when he saw the goblins running away, he looked at him with a murderous gaze.

“GURUuu...”

“A respectable plan for a goblin, but it’s meaningless.”

The triple boar was already dead.

“Send word to Hawk-Eye. Something along the lines of ‘Attack the goblins’ village’.”

The remaining adventurer took out a gem, and started talking, while Gi De readied himself for a fight.

“Your opponent is me.”

A red light shone from Bellan’s wand.

Fire

Sword

“From fire shall be born a blade.”

A fire erupted from the red gem embedded at the edge of Bellan’s wand, it

shaped itself into the figure of a sword. With the fire blade extending from the wand, Bellan's weapon had essentially changed into a naginata. As he gripped his naginata tight, he fiercely yelled.

"Taste the power of the Wand of Destruction!"

As Bellan spun his naginata above his head, it struck out at a terrifying speed toward Gi De.

Gi De already knew he couldn't win against this opponent, so he sought to buy time instead. Gi De jumped back. As he crashed into the ground, the edge of Bellan's burning naginata met him.

"Naive!"

Fire reached out from the ground Gi De crashed into, and it changed into the form of a sword. Gi De twisted his body, but one of his arms was still completely burned.

"GUGlaaaAuUAA!?"

Gi De screamed out in pain, while Bellan pursued him, and hit him again with the butt of his naginata.

Gi De somehow managed to pick himself back up, but one of his arms was no more. He had to fight one handed with his sword against Bellan.

"I've sent word. Should I help?"

"No. Help has no place in a knight's battle."

"Right." The adventurer shrugged, but Bellan didn't even glance at him.

Although no longer a knight, Bellan still considered fights to be a sacred ceremony. A ceremony wherein two warriors fought with everything they had to take everything from each other.

"...If you're not coming, then I will."

After confirming Gi De's position, Bellan nimbly moved. With a step, he struck out his flaming naginata. Gi De tried to slip under that attack, but the blade of fire struck him from the back. As Gi De writhed in pain, Bellan prepared to give the finishing strike.

“GURUuuAa!”

“Nu.”

At that moment, Gi De wrung out the last of his strength to gamble one last time: He would throw his body to tackle Bellan, as the latter tried to land the finishing blow. The naginata on its descent, Gi De moved his feet, he bent his body, to make way for that last gamble, a literal race against time, but...

“...Looks like, I was a moment slower.”

The burning naginata was faster. Gi De’s body was split in half.

“Hmm...”

“Is something wrong?”

The adventurer watching the battle asked when he saw Bellan’s thoughtful face.

“...No. It seems this goblin wasn’t the boss of this area.”

“Goblin Rares are more than enough for a leader around these parts.”

“...Then it doesn’t make sense. Why did he let the other goblins leave?”

“Well, that’s...”

“If he is the boss, then he would’ve prioritized protecting himself. He would’ve done so even if it meant using the other goblins as shields.”

That is how the leader of a horde is. He would rather protect himself than appoint another to lead or let the rest escape to save the most. To a horde’s leader, his life is his most prized treasure.

“So you’re saying there’s someone even bigger than this guy? That’s impossible. No way there’s gonna be a noble-or duke-class out here in the boundary.”

As the adventurer said that, the other two adventurers returned.

“Fuck! They got away.”

“We’ve mostly figured out where they’re headed, so if we go now, we’ll reach them before the others.”

“Let’s go then...”

After regrouping with the other two adventurers, Bellan entered deep into the forest.

In his eyes burned the desire to fight an even stronger foe.

TL Note:

1.) Beast Warrior -> Beast Tamer. This won’t change again, since the author provided a reading. Maybe there was one provided from the start, but it wasn’t in my notes. Anyway...

Intermission: Ancient Beast Tamer

TI Note: Dark mode is back! To use, click on the drop-down menu in the sidebar or at the bottom if you’re on mobile, and select ‘Dark’.

TI Note 2: This was added for clarification. The odd commas are intentional. Goblins have a hard time talking until they’re at least noble class. The exception to this rule are the druids or smarter goblins.

Status	
Name	Gi Gi
Race	Goblin
Level	95
Class	Rare
Possessed Skills	Tracking; Throw Projectile; Axe Mastery D+; Omnivorous; Jeer; A Monster's Feelings; Beast Tamer
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None
Subordinate Beasts	<div>DoubleHead</div> Two-Headed Ostrich

There is love in discipline.

Gi Gi who always rode on his beloved steed always believed that. In fact, he believed it ever since they captured Gi Gu’s village, back when the king was only a noble class. But that belief grew even more fervent when he saw how the Paradua Goblins lived.

The Paradua Goblins truly lived as one with their black tigers.

A Paradua Goblin could say ‘A!’, and the black tiger would finish with ‘hum!’.

The Paradua Goblins were truly in sync with their beasts.

“So one must be in harmony with his beast.”

His dear friend, the stealthy Gi Ji, nodded.

Gi Gi looked at his beloved steed.

Though they could not talk with words, their feelings should come across as long as they have love.

Gi Gi tried to talk to his beloved steed with his eyes.

“A,” Gi Gi tried saying, but his beloved steed only tilted its heads. Four eyes blankly looked at Gi Gi, but he wasn’t about to give up.

His love was not enough. That’s all there was to it.

“A!”, he tried shouting again, and the ^{Double}Two-Headed ^{Head}Ostrich inclined its heads even stronger. Gi Gi started to worry that the doublee head might tumble over if they kept this up.

What was he doing wrong? Gi Gi wondered.

“A-hum,” Gi Gi muttered. “I see, so that’s how to harmonize.”

Then he shook his head. What’s the point in ahum-ing alone?

Both Gi Gi and the double head tilted their heads in confusion. Then for some reason, the double head happily cried as it wrapped its two heads around Gi Gi’s neck.

“You get, along well. That’s good!” Gi Ji said, having misunderstood the situation.

“...Of course!” Gi Gi happily exclaimed as he started to feel the same.

“Let’s hunt!” He suddenly said as he rode on his double head, who happily cried in response. “Onward!”

And they set off with Gi Ji running alongside them.

The king had just conquered the Fortress of the Abyss, and was busy with the tribe chiefs. In fact, he hadn’t been seen during this rare moment of peace since he defeated the ogres and the ogre lord. It was the perfect opportunity to tour the area.



The ecosystem in the forests near the tribes’ villages was completely different from the eastern village. The old adage ‘monsters grow stronger as one heads west’ has certainly proved itself true.

Naturally, the monsters to be hunted also grew stronger. The prey ^{Giant} Gi Gi and ^{Caterpillar} Gi Ji set their eyes on was the Green Caterpillar known for its hard skin even among the monsters of this area and its ability to spit mucus. The giant caterpillars could be as big as an adult goblin when fully grown or small enough to crawl on one's hands when still young.

Double heads love to feast on baby green caterpillars. They would frequently stick their head into the ground or into fallen trees to look for baby green caterpillars to eat. As larvae, the green caterpillars' skin were still soft. Biting into one would release this irresistibly, delicious juice that's to die for.

The older ones are much bigger. Goblins can't even eat them unless they cut them up first, but they are also delicious. In fact, when the king set off for the tribes, they hunted one along the way. It was chewy and delicious.

Gi Gi, Gi Ji, and the double head spent all day looking for green caterpillars from fallen trees.

"Found one! And another one!" Gi Gi said.

"There's one here!" Gi Ji said.

When Gi Gi would speak, Gi Ji would also speak. But then without even so much as a cry, the double head went up to Gi Gi and ate a green caterpillar from his hands.

"What are you doing!?" Gi Gi asked.

The double head feigned ignorance as one of its heads ate the caterpillar in front of Gi Gi, while the other started eating caterpillar after caterpillar out of the opening in the fallen tree.

"Mumumu..." Gi Gi growled as he looked for other green caterpillars.

"We made a, killing today!" Gi Ji happily exclaimed as he threw the green caterpillar he found over to Gi Gi, who nodded as he munched on one of the baby green caterpillars.

Meanwhile, the double head that had started feasting through the opening in one of the fallen trees suddenly found itself unable to pull its head out when it stuck its other head in too. It started to desperately flap its wings.

“...Aren’t you going to help him?” Gi Ji asked.

“He did that to himself,” Gi Gi curtly replied.

“Gue!? Gue!?” the double head cried.

The two goblins who were happily feasting on the trove of green caterpillars lost themselves in the moment, and they failed to notice the approaching threat. A truly foolish mistake for a rare goblin.

“GOKYuUuRUuuu!” angrily cried something behind them.

When they turned, what greeted them were 10 giant caterpillars.

In his shock, Gi Gi lost his grip on the baby caterpillar, and then he looked at Gi Ji, who looked at him in turn. They both drew cold sweat as they stood there frozen stiff.

Meanwhile, a certain double head was still flapping its wings.

The two goblins tacitly came to an understanding.

They gradually retreated as the large number of giant caterpillars slithered toward them.

Then when they finally neared a certain double head whose head was yet stuck in some fallen tree, they turned around, and made a run for it.

“...Amen.”

“Sorry, it’s the law of the jungle. You know how it is.”

“Gue!?”

Despite looking so glum, the two goblins ran foolishly with their tail between their legs.

They passed by the double head, as they bolted off with all their strength.

The double head panicked.

You actually left me behind! In a fit of anger, the double head found its heads free. By all means, the right course of action was to shake the giant caterpillars off. But the double head wouldn’t be satisfied with just that. No. It had to at least make those two goblins suffer too. So it ran through the forest with the

caterpillars in tow.



As one might expect, an army of giant caterpillars had no say against two rare class goblins and a furious Double Two-Headed Head Ostrich in a game of cat and mice, but they weren't about to take having their home destroyed lying down either. The army of caterpillars formed a line as they continued to pursue the double head through the forest.

Giant caterpillars did not excel at running, but they had long lost their minds to anger, and they wrung out every bit of strength they could as they sought to punish their unjust invaders.

Unfortunately, reality was cruel, and the caterpillars who weren't even good at running started to find themselves running out of steam.

But then the double head who was right ahead of them suddenly cried out.

The caterpillars and the double head did not share a common language.

—It's those pesky goblins!

But they understood each other all the same. And with that, the will of the caterpillars unified. The enemy is near!

—We've caught up to the goblins!

Though rotten, the double head was after all a double head, and its speed was not something the caterpillars could match. But just as they were on the verge of giving up, the double head cried out.

"You can do it!" it seemed to say.

One of the double head's head was talking to them as it ran.

"Gue!" it cried.

He's such a good person, the caterpillars thought. As the double head gallantly cried out, they passed through the break of the forest. Then like a knight charging toward its enemy, the double head jumped.

"Gue!" it cried.

—Onward!

The army of caterpillars wrung out the last of their strength. They would give the highest of merits to the double head once they caught those pesky goblins, then the scenery of the open forest unfolded before them.



The double head had seen through a hole in tree that Gi Ji managed to pick up the caterpillar that Gi Gi dropped.

And he certainly had it in his hands when they left him their when they ran.

—I want to eat it!

Right! Once they get caught by the caterpillars, they won't be able to eat that last piece anymore!

That last piece was his!

When the double head turned around, the adult caterpillars were right behind him.

—Can't eat those. Pe!

"Gue!"

The two heads didn't realize the contradiction in his thoughts. Like that they passed through the break in the forest.

—Found them!

"Gue!"

Joy filled the double head when he noticed that the baby caterpillar was still in that goblin rare's hands.

"Oh, you came back."

For some reason, the goblin was happily caressing his wings, but the double head ignored him and went for the caterpillar.

"They followed him."

"Let's, do this."

The goblin took the caterpillar, and threw it toward the forest.

—No, the worm!

“Gueeee!”

The double head caught the caterpillar in midair. A spectacular technique even he had to admire!

But there were caterpillars below him!

—You’re in the way!



When the army of caterpillars left the forest into the open fields, what attacked them was none other than the very same double head that led their chase.

It landed right on top of the leading caterpillar. As its great weight trampled one of the caterpillars, it sent another flying as it started to run.

—But why!?

The caterpillars were confused. Why would the double head attack them all of the sudden? But then one of them saw the baby caterpillar in its mouth.

—Have we been betrayed!?

“KyuURURURUuu!”

Even the wails of the caterpillar was drowned out by the double head’s mad charge.

The caterpillars were spent after running through the forest. They could only watch as the crazy bird sent them flying left and right.

Then finally, the two goblins that had supposedly run away appeared.

“Good, job,.”

“You’re quite the devil too, huh?”

To the powerless caterpillars who’d been turned over to their bellies, the two goblins were no different from a pair of demons.



“...There sure are a lot of giant caterpillars today,” I pointed out as I ate

supper in the Fortress of the Abyss.

“Lord Gi Gi and Lord Gi Ji managed to catch an army of them today,” Kuzan said.

Didn’t I tell them that the four tribes will take care of the hunts? Or did they still want to hunt despite that? Hmm... Anyway, greed isn’t bad for growing stronger.

“It won’t be long.”

According to the One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye, the both of them would soon promote a class.

“Won’t be long for what?” Kuzan asked.

“It’s nothing,” I wryly smiled. “Come, let us eat.”

The next day, I received word that Gi Gi and his subordinate beast promoted a class.



Status

Name	Gi Gi
Race	Goblin
Level	1
Class	Noble
Possessed Skills	Tracking; Throw Projectile; Axe Mastery D+; Omnivorous; Jeer; Beast Tamer; Tacit Understanding; Ancient Beast Tamer; Beast Trainer; Cooperation; Friend of the Horde; Bug Eater
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None
Subordinate Beasts	<div>DoubleHead</div> Two-Headed Ostrich

Author’s Note:

Gi Ji: “Boss, you’re so evil...”

Gi Gi: “Not as bad as you, Your Majesty.”

Gi Ji and Gi Gi: “Bwahahahaha!”

These sort of conversations may or may not have happened.

Anyway, until next time.

Intermission: Attack II

Status

Name	Gi Zo
Race	Goblin
Level	19
Class	Druid
Possessed Skills	Magic Manipulation; Water Manipulation; Inspire
Divine Protection	^{Iren} God of Water
Attributes	Water

Gi De’s subordinates returned in haste and reported to the water mage, Gi Zo.

“Humans are attacking?”

Gi Zo did not know much about humans. The most he knew about them were the king’s treasures, Reshia and Lili. Then there was Mattis who would prepare dried meat for them and the humans who would repair the fences.

“The humans killed Gi De!?”

The reporting goblin shivered in fright when he saw the usually calm Gi Zo turn furious. The goblin continued to shake as he reported that Gi Zo sacrificed himself to let them go. By the end of the report, Gi Zo was shaking in fury.

“It doesn’t matter who it is. If they bare their fangs against us, then we shall cut them down.”

He needed to inform the spearman, Gi Da, too. So he ordered the goblin to send word. As for him, he had to pay a visit to the king’s treasure, Lady Reshia.

There would probably be some unrest from the humans because of who they were fighting. He hoped Reshia and Lili could help quell that unrest. This particularity of his to be concerned about others’ feelings is one of the things the king and Gi Za held in esteem. Unfortunately, they were the only ones who thought so.

To the goblins, power is everything. Things like concern or empathy, which have no effect on one’s social standing in the horde couldn’t be any less

relevant. And it would be so until the king solidifies his position as the rightful ruler of the horde.

Gi Zo himself did not see his power as greater than his peers, though he did find himself lacking from time to time. Because of that he felt the weight of his duty as the caretaker of the village.

“Lady Reshia, Lord Lili, it’s Gi Zo,” Gi Zo knocked, and the ladies granted him permission to enter.

Gi Zo’s respectful attitude to the king’s treasure was also born from his sense of responsibility. As he entered the crude yet orderly house of the king, he began to explain the situation. He held down the fury brimming within from the death of Gi De as he calmly reported to the king’s treasure. Afterwards, he asked them to help calm the humans.

“Very well. I shall do as you ask,” Reshia said.

Letting out a breath of relief, Gi Zo left the house. In his eyes burnt the fire of wrath born from the loss of his brethren.

“Lord Gi Zo,” the spearman, Gi Da, had his spear over his shoulder as he called out to him.

“Has lord Gi Ga returned?” Gi Zo asked, to which Gi Da shook his head. “Then there’s no other choice. We will have to overcome this danger ourselves... Lord Gi Da, I leave the village to you. I shall scatter the humans.”

Gi Da’s eyes opened wide upon hearing those words.

“No. I, should go! Lord Gi Za, is the village chief! I go!”

His burning heart seemed to fan his feelings, and he stamped his feet and even hit the ground with the butt of his spear.

“Not quite, Lord Gi Da. It is Lord Gi Ga who is in charge of the village. I am merely a representative, but it is my duty to protect the village.”

Gi Da eventually understood after it was repeatedly explained to him. The difference in intelligence between a normal goblin and a druid was big. Fortunately, Gi Zo was able to convince Gi Da to let him go.

“I will take those I can. Though my heart isn’t steady, I leave the village to you,

Lord Gi Da!”

“Leave it, to me! I, protect village!”

The males of the goblins that could fight numbered 90. But that number included the injured and the greenhorns.

The goblins could reproduce incessantly, so it came as no surprise that they have already caught up to their old numbers before the orc war.

Gi Zo took with him only a third of the goblins, but each and every one of them was the cream of the crop, every one of them a hardened veteran.

The horde of goblins headed east.



The female adventurer known as the White Hand of Life was – as the name implied – dressed in a gaudy, white robe from head to toe.

“It’s over! It’s over I tell you!” The elderly-looking adventurer clicked his hand when he saw the scene before him.

“It’s alright, it’s alright. Everything is going to be fine.” The White Hand of Life was as optimistic as ever.

“...” It was probably because of his taciturn personality that the other adventurer quietly held his shield up despite looking like he was about to curse any moment now.

A horde of goblins was before them.

After Gulland’s group that consisted mostly of adventurers destroyed an orc village, they went deeper into the forest to search for the saint while having fun hunting monsters.

Thinking about it logically, the orcs were probably at the top of the food chain here. There were a lot of them, but after Gulland attacked them, they immediately ran away. If those orcs were at the top, then it should stand to reason that the level of the monsters around weren’t much, so Gulland split his group into three.

“Would it have been better to go with the boss? Or maybe with the Wand of

Destruction?” The elderly-looking adventurer quietly asked to no one in particular.

The White Hand of Life wasn't happy with his mumblings, and she filled the wand in her hand with magic power.

“The divine god would rather you do your job than complain,” she said.

“Right, right... I probably should start currying favor with god now, eh.”

While the elderly-looking adventurer kept yapping, the taciturn adventurer nodded.

Shield

Rush

“Unyielding Shield!”

He struck out his shield against the oncoming horde of goblins to open a path. The goblins went flying, and a small path opened up for them, allowing them to slip away from being surrounded. The taciturn adventurer was the very example of a heavy knight. But the difference in number was just too great, and the goblins kept trying to find their way around their backs.

“Sorry, but I can't let you gobs dig a hole out of that one! Wind Slash!” The elderly-looking adventurer slashed at the goblins with his long sword. It moved faster than the wind, leaving no opening for the goblins to take. This was the power of the light soldiers, the power of speed.

The small band of adventurers worked together to escape from the goblins' surround.

Confusion

“The divine god is great!”

Magic power emanated from the wand of the White Hand of Life, wrapping itself around the area and oscillating.

The oscillating magic brought confusion to the goblins, causing them to slow down as they lost sight of their enemy.

“Just what you'd expect from the beloved priest of god!” The elderly-looking adventurer struck his sword against the yet sane goblins.

“Just hurry up and get out of their surround!” The White Hand of Healing said as she tried to keep herself from showing her impatience while they slipped

through the confused goblins.

“Hurry.” The taciturn adventurer said.

But just as they were about to get free...

“Water bullet!”

“Ugh!?”

A groan of pain sounded from one of them.

Standing before them was a seemingly smart, red goblin, with a staff in one hand. It gave off the sort of dignity one would expect from a boss monster.

“Oh, come on... A druid?” The elderly-looking adventurer muttered, to which the taciturn adventurer nodded.

“Pull yourselves together! Remember your master!” The druid’s words woke the goblins from their stupor, and they fixed their grip on their clubs and stakes as they once again approached the three adventurers.

“Just fight as you normally do! Don’t cower!”

At the goblin druid’s words, the goblins all attacked.

“...Tch!” The taciturn adventurer clicked his tongue.

Two goblins took his flanks. At the same time, a club came swinging at him from in front, leaving him no choice but to jump back.

“Damn it!” The elderly-looking adventurer cursed.

He had struck his sword against one of the goblins, but it was able to receive his blow. Then while he was still open, another goblin aimed for his legs, breaking his balance and leaving him open to what would have been a fatal attack if he hadn’t somehow blocked it. The sparks erupting from his sword and the goblin’s club made him draw cold sweat.

The goblin that had stopped his blow a while ago, struck out its sharpened stake, passing right in front of him. He jumped back to make some distance, but behind him was the taciturn adventurer. They crashed into each other.

“Gigi!” A goblin cried.

An attack came swinging at them, and the elderly-looking adventurer hurriedly used his sword as a shield.

“Arrgh!” The elderly-looking adventurer cried out in pain.

One of the goblins had aimed for his legs. Just one would have been manageable, but then another three attacked him at the same time.

The goblins fought together well. Too well, in fact, and before he knew it, his clothes were drenched in sweat.

“Tch!”

He swept with his long sword against goblins.

“This is bad.”

The goblins were better at working together than he’d thought. Who would’ve thought there could be someone other than the elves or the demihumans of the main continent who could fight together this well?

The attack he’d received earlier to his feet was fatal. His life wasn’t in danger just yet, but he could no longer run from the goblins.

The taciturn adventurer didn’t look so swell himself either. His shield was stuck on the ground, and his hands seemed to have been done in, as he was desperately trying to stop the bleeding.

Running wasn’t an option. But then defeating all the goblins was even harder. In that case, there was only one option left. They would have to defeat the chief of the horde.

Unfortunately, that was a far fetched dream as the wall of normal goblins kept them a good distance away from the druid.

Heal

“As the divine god wills!”

Suddenly, the pain vanished. And the two adventurers found themselves brimming with power. When they turned to the voice that spoke that chant, they found the White Hand of Life surrounded by something they could not make out.

“The divine god has not abandoned us yet. Please do your best,” she said.

It was only through the slight opening of her robes, but the elderly-looking adventurer was sure that she smiled just then.

“Tch...I don’t know about god or whatever, but it sure as hell feels like you’re just taking advantage of us, sitting there at the back without risking your life! Oi, quiet guy! Can you fight!?” The elderly-looking adventurer asked.

“Of course,” the taciturn adventurer quietly replied as he took out a hatchet from his great shield.

As the adventurers and the goblins stared daggers at each other, the curtains upon the dance of death between man and goblin were drawn.

Intermission: Attack III

Status

Name	Gi Zo
Race	Goblin
Level	19
Class	Druid
Possessed Skills	Magic Manipulation; Water Manipulation; Inspire
Divine Protection	^{Iren} God of Water
Attributes	Water

The water magician, Gi Zo, shot his water bullet toward the adventurer, who blocked with his shield. Gi Zo could not shoot him down, but his relentless barrage of water bullets left the adventurer with no other choice but to keep defending. It was a barrage of power and accuracy.

Yet Gi Zo’s countenance remained grim.

The reason was the healer behind the two adventurers.

^{Heal}
“As the divine god wills!”

That irritating white light wrapped itself around the two adventurers, and all of the sudden, they were back to health. The tank with exceedingly high defense. The attacker who would cut to pieces the normal goblins. But the most annoying of them all was the healer, who not only defended but also restored their strength.

That seemingly endless magic power allowed them to gradually whittle away at the goblin’s numbers.

They could heal as much they wished, recovering their wounds and strength, while the goblins could only incur more and more damage. Even then, Gi Zo had no choice but to try and endure. But...

^{Confusion}
“The divine god is great!”

“Water bullet!”

If they let up even a little, the healer would cast a spell of confusion to try and break whatever advantage they had from their number. Gi Zo tried to aim for her, but the taciturn adventurer stopped him with his shield.

“Ku...” Gi Zo clicked his tongue out of frustration.

They couldn’t win like this.

He needed to remain calm and think of a way to win.

5 of the 30 goblins were already down for the count. They had to think of a way to reduce the enemy’s numbers. If not that, then at least a way to stop them...

Hera

Suddenly, the Goddess of Wisdom smiled upon him

“Ready the stones!” Gi Zo ordered, and a group of three goblins began picking up stones.

“The target is the human at the back.”

Gi Zo ordered the normal goblins to aim for the healer.

“Damn it! They’ve figured us out!” The elderly-looking adventurer, the attacker of the group, used his body to protect the White Hand of Life.

Gi Zo smiled devilishly when he saw that.

“...You know your target. Keep throwing those rocks!”

The rock-throwing squad sealed the White Hand of Life’s movements. Gi Zo ordered the goblins not to attack the sword-wielding adventurer, so as to force the shield-bearing adventurer into defending himself.

As long as the rocks kept coming, the sword-wielding adventurer could be kept away from the shield-bearing one, and the sword-wielding one won’t be able to attack the normal goblins either. But what was most crucial of all was the healer, for she was the humans’ lifeline.

Heal

“As the divine god wills!”

The heal came earlier this time. That was proof that the humans’ shield won’t last long.

“Victory is at hand! At last, we shall avenge Gi De!”

The goblins’ spirit rose.



“This is bad. This is really bad.” The elderly-looking adventurer grit his teeth as he fended off the flying stones. Who would’ve thought there was a goblin who could think this well?

Not only were they able to fight well together, they even thought up a plan to seal their movements. They were so good, they could pass for adventurers themselves.

When the elderly-looking adventurer turned to his back, he saw the White Hand of Life breathing roughly as she grit her teeth.

Heal

“As the divine god wills!”

Healing for the umpteenth time, the taciturn adventurer’s armor no longer resembled its former image as the goblins attacks bore into them one after another. At this rate, they would all be annihilated.

When the elderly-looking adventurer thought of having even the taciturn adventurer’s body hair plucked out, he couldn’t help but laugh, though he did so forcefully.

“Since it’s come to this, we should...” He was about to say when a voice came from behind.

“I’ll open a path,” the White Hand of Life said.

When they turned around to her, they saw her breathing heavily.

She looked at them as they looked at her, and for the first time, they saw her face. She was beautiful.

“...You have a plan, yes?”

Heal

“Of course. This, eight, tch... As the divine god wills!”

The goblins swarmed their tank, so she had to forcefully cast Heal to help him fight off the goblins.

“We don’t have time to talk. Just say what you need!”

“We’ll break through and retreat. Yugil first, then me, and then you, Vitz.”

The elderly-looking adventurer, Vitz, did not think she would actually remember their names. For a moment, he looked at her, wide-eyed. A high-ranking adventurer, the White Hand of life herself, actually remembered their name.

“Questions?”

“N-None.”

He could risk his life if it’s for a beautiful woman, he convinced himself.

“Yugil will watch the rear, while you take his place to fight off the goblins. After that leave the rest to me,” the White Hand of Life said.

“Ok!” He replied. “Yugil, we’re switching!”

The taciturn shield-bearing adventurer, Yugil, seemed surprised for a moment, but he quickly regained himself, and ran from the goblins. They tried to chase after him, but Vitz took Yugil’s place, keeping them from pursuing any further.

“Wind Slash!”

The winds slashed toward the goblins, but they were able to defend. At most, a goblin or two were hurt, but that was fine. He only needed to buy time.

“You should be looking over here!” Vitz said as a goblin tried to pass by his flank. Using all of his strength, he blew the goblin away.

“Water bullet!”

Parry

“False abandonment.”

The flat side of his sword scooped up the water bullet, and like that he changed its trajectory.

“Magic won’t work on me. Now, who else wants some?” Vitz smiled.

When the goblins saw him easily flick away the goblin druid’s strongest spell, they all faltered for a moment. What they didn’t know was that Vitz had gambled just now.

That earlier parry only went well by luck. It was not something he could repeat so easily, as the odds of success weren't that high. It was a 50-50 gamble, but since he won, he was going to squeeze it for all its worth.

"Vitz, fall back!" The White Hand of Life said.

When Vitz heard that, he bolted for it.

"After him!"

The irritated voice of goblins could be heard behind, but there was no hesitation in him. He ran as fast as he could.



Gi Zo regretted his decision when he saw the adventurer running away so quickly. The technique just now was nothing more than a bluff. He shouldn't be able to repeat it much.

So he decided to chase after him, but then light suddenly filled his vision.

Light

"The light of god will show the way.."

When the words of a human fell upon his ears, a light that could scorch his eyes filled the area, and for a moment, he found himself unable to move. By the time he regained his sight, the humans were no more.

"...After them! Absolutely do not let them go!"

He could immediately tell that the humans had run. There were marks on the grass and the smell of the humans lingered yet.

"Bring back the injured. If Lord Gi Ga returns, report to him the situation!"

With the injured gone, there were only 20 of them left. Gi Zo took those 20 to chase after the humans. As they continued, the smell of humans grew stronger.

It was not the smell of Gi De's murderers, however. But that was all the more reason that he could not let them go. According to the report of Gi De's subordinates, the number of humans is staggering.

A number too great to count.

Just three of them were already that strong. If they don't whittle down the

enemy's numbers, the village will surely fall.

He wasn't certain if even the king himself could deal with that many humans, so he had to put a stop to them here.

"Onward! Slay the humans!"

The goblins ran faster at Gi Zo's words. Goblins originally ran faster than humans in the forest, for they could move as they pleased. It didn't take long before the figure of a human appeared before them. Immediately, Gi Zo fired off his water bullet.

"Water bullet!"

The human was able to dodge by bending his body, but he still ended up being delayed.

"Surround him!"

Gi Zo ordered the goblins onward, and they encircled the humans. The humans had their backs to each other, but leaving no chance to fate, Gi Zo had the stone-throwing squad start throwing stones.

There was no need to hurry. If they slowly whittle down the enemy, they can finish them off once they run out of gas.

As he stifled the anger seething within, Gi Zo calmly commanded the goblins.



He fended off the falling stones despite being irritated.

"You sure it's here!?" Vitz asked.

"Yes, I'm positive," the White Hand of Life replied.

The three of them fended off the falling stones. They had led the goblins here according to the plan of the White Hand of Life, but Vitz failed to see how this was any better. If anything, it would be more apt to say that they were in a worse situation now than before, since this time they were actually surrounded.

"Don't worry," the White Hand of Life said.

He couldn't get mad at her. The one who decided to gamble was him. He was not forced to this, so he didn't have the right to get mad just because the plan

didn't work.

Gradually, more and more rocks came flying at them. Some were straight balls and some were curved, the goblins were a truly, tricky bunch.

In the midst of that seemingly endless rain of stones, one grazed past his legs, taking his attention away. It was for a moment, only a moment, but it was in that moment that a stone came falling right over his head.

"Tch!?"

His mind a bit hazy, he tried to stand up, but stone after stone were already headed his way. There was even a water bullet mixed in with that barrage.

Yugil's shield had long turned into a mere lump of iron, while his armor was a mess of holes. Even the White Robe of Life had her pure, white robe stained with red here and there.

Is this the end?—

But just as he was about to give up, the screams of goblins resounded in the forest.

"—He made it."

With a shield bigger than even Yugil's, it was none other than the Herculean, Swallow Wyatt of the Blood Oath of the Flying Clan Swallow., who protected them.

"It would have been pretty bad if not for the sign, actually," the Hawk-Eyed Fick joked.

"Leave the rest to us," the mage slayer, Mill, who suddenly appeared behind them said.

As the goblins screamed in pain, the swing of a great sword cut through the air. Clad around the great sword were – as his two names implied – a storm of wind.

"Ha ha ha ha ha ha! Die! Die, filthy monsters!!"

The storm knight, Gulland, a raging soul of violence and might. With the swing of his great sword the goblins came flying to the trees, and goblin after goblin were slayed together with their clubs and stakes.

The great sword known as Blue Lightning made short work of the goblins. He was truly the embodiment of the word, hero.



How do you describe a scene like that?

Gi Zo could not think of it, but one such word would be... despair.

As far as Gi Zo was concerned, the only thing he could think of was that a human was attacking them.

Just a while ago, they were pursuing a group of strong humans. When they caught up, they managed to push them into a corner, and were even about to finish them off. But then all of the sudden, everything changed. A great sword clad in storm called upon the winds, and suddenly, they found themselves on the losing end.

“B-Bastard...”

They were going to lose.

The indisputable truth before him overwhelmed him.

“No! This can’t go on!”

Be that as it may, however, they couldn’t just stand by doing nothing either. They might not be able to win, but they had to fight. At the very least, he needed to buy time.

“Retreat! All of you retreat! Someone needs to make it back to the village!”

As he ordered his subordinates, he shot a water bullet to the humans that just entered the fray. But that water bullet was easily cut by a female adventurer.

The water bullet that was flying in the air was cut cleanly by the sharp nails of her talons.

“Poorly matched.”

A few words left her lips before she ran for Gi Zo. In the blink of an eye, she was right in front of him. Gi Zo shot more water bullets at her, but they all merely dissipated.

The mage slayer. In her talons lay absolute power against ether, and when

she brandished them against Gi Zo, he immediately turned to take some distance.

“Wha...!?”

But the storm right behind her had already cut Gi Zo. By the time he’d taken some distance, he was already a thousand, tiny little pieces.

“Gulland, you dare!?”

Without the slightest concern for Mill, Gulland continued to hack away at his next prey.

“Don’t dawdle, young lady,” he said. “Unless you want to be killed by me.”

His lips twisted a cruel smile as he slaughtered the goblins one after another.



Status

Name	Gulland Rifenin
Race	Human
Level	88
Job	Holy Knight; Storm Knight; Traveler; Seeker of Monster Dens; Frenzied Sword; Soul of A Crazy Warrior;
Possessed Skills	Strong Arm; Swordsmanship A-; Charisma; Raging Greed; Hundred-Demon Slayer; Fire God's Blessing; Rebellious Spirit
Divine Protection	Fire God
Attributes	Fire
Equipment	Blue Lightning (Great Sword)

Strong Arm

—Prevents backlash when using a skill.

Charisma

—Other people will respect you. Increases influence.

Seeker of Monster Dens (Previously translated as Dare Devil)

—When fighting in dungeons, strength and mana are raised. (LOW)

Frenzied Sword

—Slash consecutively against a distant target with a storm of swords.

Soul of a Crazy Warrior

—Strength will multiply several times in exchange for one’s sanity.

Raging Greed

—The chance of stealing item from a defeated enemy is increased. If the target doesn’t have any items, damage will increase.

Hundred-Demon Slayer

—Regeneration increased after defeating a monster. (LOW)

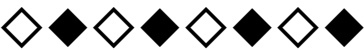
—Mana is increased. (MEDIUM)

Fire God’s Blessing

—Damage from fire is reduced. (HIGH)

Rebellious Spirit (Previously translated as Rebellious. Might just be a mistake in my notes.)

—When fighting against a higher classed opponent, mental attacks are negated.



Author’s Note:

Goblin Fatalities: Gi De, Gi Zo, and normal goblins.

Human Fatalities: none

Goblin Casualties: 20 normal goblins

Human Casualties: none (The White Hand of Life healed them.)

Intermission: Gi Ga’s Decision

Status

Name	Gi Ga Rax
Race	Goblin
Level	89
Class	Noble; Guardian
Possessed Skills	Spearmanship C+; Overpowering Howl; Omnivorous; Instant Kill; Adherent of the King; Spear Throwing; Warrior's Soul; Indomitable Soul; Insightt
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None

The village was a flickering flame by the time Gi Ga Rax returned.

“Did something happen?”

There were fewer goblins than usual, and the water mage, Gi Zo, who would always greet him was nowhere to be seen.

“Lord Gi Ga!”

It was the spear-wielding goblin, Gi Da, who greeted Gi Ga upon his return. The puzzled Gi Ga asked what all the commotion was about, and when he found out what happened, he got off his mount to think.

“Lord Alashd, forgive me, but it seems we’ll have to put off our farewell party for later.”

“So it seems.”

Alashd only nodded as he took his spear when Gi Ga said that. He seemed completely unperturbed.

“We have a custom in our tribe where we knock our spears to promise that we will one day meet again. Brave warrior, Gi Ga Rax, I believe you are qualified to make such an oath. Would you do me the honor?”

Gi Ga was taken aback. He knew very well how proud the goblins of Paradua were, so he understood the significance of Alashd’s words.

“...The honor is mine,” Gi Ga said as he brought up his spear, and lightly knocked against Alashd’s.

“May we both live to meet another day, Lord Gi Ga. Onwards!”

Alashd took off on his mount, riding faster than the wind for Paradua village.

He could’ve defended the village with Gi Ga, but there was a restlessness within that he could not ease. It was not as if he had ever met a human, but from the report he’d heard, the humans were both powerful and cruel. If so, then reinforcements would be necessary. Though somewhere in his heart, he hoped that it wouldn’t.

“Please make it in time!”

To Aluhaliha, and to the king... They must be informed of this threat. And so, the goblin of Paradua, though pained, rode like the wind on black-tiger-back to reach the village if only a moment sooner.



Gi Zo was dead.

The moment that report reached his ears, Gi Ga decided to abandon the village. And he gathered the humans to the village square to inform them of that decision.

“We will go through the lake to take refuge at the fortress where the king resides.”

Everyone was surprised at his decision. Reshia, the humans, and even Gi Da and the rest of the goblins.

“We don’t know how strong the enemy is, but more than anything else, we can’t risk putting the king’s treasure in danger.”

“Then what’s going to happen to this village!?”

The one who raised his voice was a male human. It was one of the newer men, but Gi Ga couldn’t recall his name.

“We abandon it,” Gi Ga firmly replied.

“No!” The man screamed.

“Is the enemy that strong?” It was Lili who asked that.

Reshia seemed to be brooding over something, as her head was hung down.

“Gi De and Gi Zo are both dead,” Gi Ga replied. “The other 20 normals have also been done in.”

The staggering number of casualties greatly shocked the humans who weren’t used to fighting. Moreover, that 20 was the cream of the crop amongst the goblins of this village. The strength of the enemy was not something that could be matched even with Gi Ga.

“If you can’t agree with this decision, then it’s fine. It doesn’t matter. But the king’s treasure, Lady Reshia, you must come with us.”

The male humans looked at each other. How were they to protect their young and women?

“But...” One of the men tried to say, but Gi Ga shot him down.

“The decision is final,” he curtly replied. “Lady Reshia, please begin your preparations.”

Reshia was brought to the king’s house at Gi Ga’s urging, and then Lili not long after. The men who were still at the square all looked at each other, wondering what they would do.

In the end, the humans split. Some would go with Reshia, while some would stay behind in the village. But regardless of their decision, the goblins all left the village.



Gulland, Gi Zo’s killer, spent the night in that same area to reach out to the others and meet up. The White Hand of Life was already with them, so the only one missing was the Wand of Destruction, Bellan. It wasn’t until a day later that they rendezvoused with him, and then the adventurers all talked about what happened in their quests, as well as what they plan to do next. Not one man was missing, so all the adventurer groups reported their success.

“At most, we stumbled onto an orc or two, but that’s about it, there’s no big catch or anything,” Gulland said, to which Wyatt nodded.

“That leaves the goblin faction then,” he said.

“I find the goblins to be a greater threat than the orcs,” the adventurer, Vitz, interjected as he looked toward the White Hand of Life.

“Right, there were a lot of them,” said Wyatt before becoming thoughtful. “But it sure is rare for them to fight more than the orcs. Were they isolated? Or is it because they have a powerful leader?”

“I also believe the goblins are a greater threat,” the Wand of Destruction, Bellan, who rarely spoke said. Normally, he would leave the talking to Wyatt. Was there something he had in mind?

“A rare sight,” Wyatt said.

When he noticed people staring at him, Bellan explained. “There was a rare-class among the goblins, but he wasn’t their leader. He was a small fry. There’s probably a big one behind the goblins.”

“Are you implying there’s a noble class?” Wyatt asked.

Bellan shaking his head made the adventurers look at each other.

“A duke then? But in a place like this?” Wyatt said, pondering.

Then with a ferocious grin on his face, Gulland loudly spoke.

“It’s decided! We’re going after the goblins!”

“Wait, what about the saint!” Asked the mage killer, Mill Dora, earning her the sharp glare of the hero adventurer, Gulland.

“If the saint is yet alive,” the White Hand of Life interjected. “Then she’s probably with the strongest monsters of the area. If so, then she’s probably at the village of the goblins.”

Gulland sneered as he watched Mill reluctantly step down. After he announced their departure first thing in the morning, the adventurers all dispersed.

“Mill, can I speak to you for a moment?”

It was Wyatt who said that.

“What?” Mill impatiently replied.

Wyatt smiled an elderly and gentle smile in return. “Is there something troubling you? You seem to have a hard time with Gulland.”

She was a woman known to quietly do her job. It was rare to see her that talkative.

“I took this job because he said he would rescue the saint. But that guy is...”

Wyatt couldn’t help but laugh when he saw her act like a sulking kid.

“It’s not like Gulland said he has no intentions of saving the saint.”

“Then he should work harder!”

“Mill...”

With a gentle pat on her head, the old man acted more like a father admonishing his child than a coworker. “It’s not that I don’t see where you’re coming from. I mean the saint is – to some extent, no matter how small – somewhat related to you, right?”

Pitying the girl lightly nodding her head, Wyatt added. “Don’t worry, I’m sure she’s alive. After we defeat the goblins and save her, you should stand by her side and protect her.”

After seeing her nod her head again, Wyatt let go of her head with a wry smile.

“Sleep well, ok?”

“You too, Wyatt.”

“Cheeky kid.”

Status	
Name	Mill Dora
Race	Half Elf
Level	49
Job	Skilled Assassin
Possessed Skills	Mixed Soul; Fire God's Blessing; One who shuns magic; An Elf's Tail; Rebellious Spirit; Silent Moon; Jack of all trades;
Divine Protection	Fire God

Attributes Fire
Status Agility is increased due to being one-fourth elf

- Mixed Soul**
- Elf and humans will shun you. (LOW)
- Physical abilities increased. (LOW)

- Fire God’s Blessing**
- You have the blessing of the god of fire. Resistance to fire increased. (MEDIUM) Regeneration increased. (MEDIUM)

- An Elf’s Tail**
- You can control freely control your presence in the forest.

- One who shuns magic**
- Magic casted by enemies with a lower class than yours will have no effect. (MEDIUM)

- Silent Moon**
- Hides your presence.
- Preemptive strike for the first blow. If the attack fails, damage received will be doubled.

- Jack of all trades**
- Mastery to all weapons is raised to C-.



Author’s Note:

A quarter is a quarter, but when it comes to the blood of other races mixing, like in the case of an elf’s and a human’s, a quarter is considered half. So Mill would be called a half elf. But that’s only in name, and in the end, unless atavism occurs or something, the ability she can muster would be only at the level of a quarter-blood.

In the case of goblins mating with humans, the resulting offspring is almost always a goblin. So, the male seed is dominant. Which is why they can kidnap the female of other races, and do this and that.

In Mill Dora’s case, her grandpa is human (deceased) and her grandma is an elf (whereabouts unknown). Her parents are both humans (both deceased), so

her case is already that of atavism, as she's able to use the abilities that came from her grandmother. It's because of those abilities that she was able to become an adventurer with a second name.

To sum it up: Goblin x Human = Goblin. Human x Elf = Human or Elf.

Intermission: Those who chase and those who are chased

Status	
Name	Gi Da
Race	Goblin
Level	36
Class	Rare
Possessed Skills	Spearmanship C-; Knowledge of the Spear; Spear Throwing; Overpowering Howl; Unreasonably Stubborn
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None

The fleeing goblins could not run as fast as they could because of the humans and the pregnant goblins, but they still orderly left the village with Gi Ga Rax at the lead and Gi Da right behind.

A full day had passed since Gi Ga and his men left the village. At this time, Alashd had already arrived where the king was. And though dirty and unwashed, the first thing he sought was an audience with the king.

He told the king of the human threat approaching the village. A look of shock appeared on the king’s eyes, but that was all, and it was only for a moment.

“Gather the men!” The king said. “We set off at once! Kuzan will defend the fortress!”

With Kuzan watching over the fortress, the king left the fortress with the rest of the goblin army. At the lead was Gi Gi, followed by the young chieftain of Paradua, Hal, and the king himself leading the rest of the tribes. Like this the goblin army headed east.



Meanwhile, the adventurer group led by Gulland was forced to stop a day’s distance from where Gi Zo was killed.

“Gowen, that bastard!”

Gulland heaved and fumed as he looked for Gowen Ranid, who was yet to arrive.

“It can’t be helped. We’ll have to wait. Even we can’t move without supply,” Wyatt said as he tried to calm the fuming Gulland.

“It’s because the only thing he has going for him is that big body of his,” Mill said in a rare moment of agreement with Gulland, clearly annoyed at not being able to leave despite already breaking camp.

“We mustn’t be hasty. This too is the will of god,” the White Hand of Life generously said, to which Vitz and Yugil who were already used to her antics looked at each other, and wryly smiled.

Now as for why the adventurers found themselves at a standstill here, the answer was quite simple. It’s because they have no supplies.

The three holy knights originally agreed to go their own ways, but the land seeking Gowen and the hunt seeking Gulland saw an opportunity to be had.

In order to achieve their own goals, the both of them decided to neglect the mission of saving the saint. Gowen wanted land and Gulland wanted to hunt. One was a feudal lord who wished to expand his territory and the other was a famous adventurer. It wasn’t hard to see that they could benefit from each other if they just put away their emotions and worked together.

The feudal lord would provide the supplies: food, water, medicine, and other goods, while the adventurer would cut down the monsters, and clear the land.

“Well, you are a cowardly bastard who can’t even protect himself,” Gulland said.

“Just think of it as me hiring a pack of watch dogs,” Gowen calmly replied.

It was in this way that the two of them came to an agreement, and as a result, the adventurers couldn’t stray too far from the feudal lord and his men lest they wished to find themselves without supplies.

The adventurers wanted to go hunt the rest of the goblins, but couldn’t because the feudal lord’s group was too slow. But that was to be expected,

after all they were building a road as they followed from behind.

There might not be any monsters left for them to fight, but they still had to pull out the trees and dig out the ground, so of course they were going slow.

Adventurers could normally go into a dungeon with a week's worth of supply, but the location of the goblin village was uncertain. There was no telling how far they would have to walk before they would find it, because of that they couldn't stray too far without the feudal lord's supply.

To adventurers knowing the exact location of the dungeon and having plenty of resources are the two most important conditions when hunting. It wouldn't do to attack a dungeon, and then die of hunger afterwards. The adventurers knew this well. All the more so when said adventurers are first rate, so even Gulland himself couldn't push forward.

"Damn it!" He cursed.

Yet despite that he still ordered for camp to be made. They would have no choice but to wait.

Two days later they got their supplies.

As soon as they received their supplies, Gulland and his men took off like a pack of wolves on the hunt for a flock of sheep.

When Gowen saw that, he said with an expressionless face. "Take the Yuan Scouting Party, and follow the adventurers."

"As you command!"

His cold gaze ever followed the backs of the adventurers.



The horde of runaways continued to flee to the north.

Gi Ga fought the monsters that blocked their path mostly by himself, as Gi Da and the other warrior goblins were at the back. Gi Ga personally arranged for this to ensure the safety of the rear in the case the humans managed to catch up.

It was not easy traveling through the forest without road. It took them two

days just to get through and reach the lake, then from there, they headed west. Their goal was the rocky mountain that Gi Go once lived in. There were few monsters around it, being the former home of the gray wolves, so Gi Ga thought it would be a good place to rest.

The beast tamers carried the injured goblins on their beasts, while a member of Gi Go's old tribe guided them.

"Kisha!"

While they were resting by the bank of the lake, a familiar cry reached his ears along with the sound of humans screaming.

Lizard men. Gi Ga approached them with a spear on his only hand, while Gi Da watched his back.

The lizard men were an enemy he'd once met on this same shore, so he stopped momentarily before them. "He did not miss the opening they showed when one of them brandished its curved sword, and in the next moment, a spear was lodged right into the chest of a lizard man.

"Magnificent."

Gi Ga used his long reach to defeat the lizard men from afar, while Gi Da took care of the approaching ones with his short spear.

In less than five minutes, they managed to take down five lizard men. Gi Ga was filled with emotion as he looked down their corpses. Seeing that, Gi Da called out to him.

"Is something the matter?" He asked.

"I once fought with the king here," Gi Ga replied.

Back then the king ordered him to fight, and he fought until he could no longer move. The king had to step in to save him. He was so young and inexperienced then.

He couldn't help but laugh bitterly when he thought that, though at the same time it strengthened his resolve. The king – his king – is waiting for them in that direction.

"I can't die now."

His feelings renewed, Gi Ga prepared to leave again.



“It’s a village,” Fick said as his skill, True Sight of the Hawk, revealed the path on the other side of the trees.

“How many?” Mill asked, being one of the two along with Fick who were tasked to go scout. They were chosen because of their quickness, as that meant they would definitely be able to bring back info to the group.

“There’s not a lot. At most, there’s... 5.”

“Alright. Let’s go back for now.”

Fick and Mill went back to report to Gulland and his men.

When they came back Gulland and Bellan were butting heads.

“Did something happen?” Fick asked, while Mill was somewhat impressed, as that was not something she could see herself doing.

“It doesn’t sit right with me, being watched like that from the back,” Bellan bitterly said.

When Mill asked Wyatt for an explanation, he wryly smiled as he looked toward the direction they came from. “Apparently, Lord Ranid doesn’t trust us much. Can’t say I fault him though.”

Mill followed the direction he was looking, and there she saw a party of scouts peeping at them.

“It doesn’t sit well with me either,” she said.

“Indeed,” Fick agreed.

But they couldn’t push them away either. They were free to do as they wished after all, so the adventurers shifted their attention to Mill’s and Fick’s report.

“No way there’s only five of them. Not a chance in hell that’s happening with a goblin horde of that scale,” Vitz mumbled, to which Yugil nodded.

“Are you saying you can’t trust my ‘True Sight of the Hawk’?” Fick unhappily asked.

“What they mean is that it’s probably a trap,” the White Hand of Life added.

The group of adventurers became thoughtful at those words.

“Doesn’t matter,” Gulland said. “We’ll just beat them all up even if it is a trap.”

It didn’t matter how strong the goblins were if there were only five of them.

“Any complaints? No? Then let’s go!”

With the great sword of blue thunder on his back, Gulland bolted off for the village with the adventurers in tow.



Status

Name	Fick Barbad
Race	Human
Level	78
Job	Skilled Adventurer
Possessed Skills	True Sight of the Hawk; Meld; Shadow Walker; Dog Nosed; Swordsmanship C+; Archery C+
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None

True Sight of the Hawk

- Ignore obstacles in the way to see the enemy.
- Has no effect on enemies over two classes above one’s own.

Meld

- Hides one’s presence to stealthily approach the enemy.

Shadow Walker

- Vision isn’t hindered by dark places.

Dog Nosed

- Can follow the trail of scent with the accuracy of a dog’s nose.

Author’s Note:

Gi Ga finds himself reminded of a certain king who hasn’t been showing up

lately.

It takes about 10 days to get to the Fortress of the Abyss, but that's while walking and hunting for food... And only when going there for the first time, it's a lot faster when you know the way.

Now I wonder if that reinforcement is going to make it.

Intermission: The Witching Hour

Status

Name	Gi Da
Race	Goblin
Level	36
Class	Rare
Possessed Skills	Spearmanship C-; Knowledge of the Spear; Spear Throwing; Overpowering Howl; Unreasonably Stubborn
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None

As the adventurers kicked down the door of every house, they warily asked the humans they found of the goblins’ whereabouts.

“Where are they?” Bellan asked in that interrogative manner he’d picked up when he was still a knight, while Mill asked the women left in the village about the saint. As a result, they were able to confirm that the saint was in fact still alive, and so they hurried their pace even as they kept a watchful eye out.

Lopping off the protruding branch and kicking off the ground, they chased after the goblins with hastened gait.

Mill led from the front. After confirming the saint’s survival, her desire to save her reached the peak, and she could not help but take the most dangerous position of them all. As someone who was originally famed for her speed, her haste made the group of adventurers go even faster.

Still, there was a limit to the distance one could cross in a day. Half the day later, they reached a lake and happened upon a group of lizard men. The ghastly Mill and the war-loving Gulland made short work of them, then they hurried themselves even more. But in the end, they had to stop to make camp when the day came to a close.

“Just a little bit more. If we go just a little further,” Mill pestered, but Gulland firmly shook his head.

“...Wyatt,” Mill turned to Wyatt.

But he only agreed with Gulland. “Sorry, but he’s right this time.”

Mill drooped her shoulders at that.

“Actually,” Fick said when he saw the downhearted maiden. “If you don’t mind accompanying me alone, I still have to patrol the area.”

Wyatt wryly smiled when he saw Fick wink after saying that, while Gulland just said that they could do whatever they want. Shortly after, Mill left with Fick.

Then after an hour of searching around the camp, Fick came to a halt.

“Well paint me green and call me a goblin,” Fick said with an expression that wanted to laugh but couldn’t.

“What? Is something there?” Mill asked.

“You bet, a huge horde of almost a hundred of them gobs,” Fick said as he quietly traced back his steps, planning to retreat, but when he saw Mill, he stopped.

“Hey!” Fick quietly called. “What are you doing?”

“Thank you, Fill,” Mill said. “Lady Reshia is there. I have to save her.”

Fick managed to catch her by the shoulder before she left. Quieting his voice as much as he could, he rebuked her. “Are you stupid? Look at the situation!”

The sun had already set. With darkness everywhere, it was no longer a time of man but of monsters. Fighting in this darkness, in which the monsters could fight at their best, was nothing short of suicide.

“Let go!” Mill said as she struggled with Fick, but then they both heard something sound from the thickets. Like a pair of deer caught in the headlights, the both of them stood frozen still for a moment before deciding to retreat.

“...We’re going, ok?”

“Damn it... Just wait, Lady Resiha! I’ll definitely save you!”

The two adventurers quickly retreated from the goblin horde.



Meanwhile, Gowen Ranid stopped at the village the adventurers left. Before him was a plate of simple food no different from what his men ate, a pile of paperwork that needed to be done, and the residents of this village.

“So why are you people here?” He asked as he signed the papers, then he looked at the men with that ever cold gaze of his.

“We were...” The man hesitated for a moment.

The man who answered for the group was the man in charge of the building of the fences around the king’s house and the rest of the village. His hesitation at answering did not escape the feudal lord’s cold eyes. Those eyes that seemed to be looking at something rather than someone.

“We were kidnapped by the goblins,” the man’s wife answered for him.

Her husband glanced at her with shock, but she was clearly emphasizing that they were in fact kidnapped.

“I see... It must have been difficult,” the feudal lord said.

The couple heaved a sigh of relief.

“If that is all, then I welcome you to my fief. Rest assured you will be protected along the way,” the feudal lord said.

“Thank you very much,” the husband said.

“You are dismissed.”

Like that the Feudal Lord, Ranid, hastily settled the issue of the five residents.

“Was that alright?” His adjutant asked. “Their women might be of child, of goblin child that is...”

“It’s fine.” Only Gowen’s eyes moved to answer him. “Once they return to my territory, they will have to pay all unpaid taxes. Goblins are of little relevance.”

The adjutant swallowed his breath upon hearing that. Gowen apparently figured that they must’ve ran from another fief, and was apparently intending on making them pay the taxes they failed to pay once they return.

Commoners fleeing a fief wasn’t rare. On the contrary, it was quite common.

And that was so for just a year's worth of tax. These people must've been missing for some time now. It wouldn't be odd if these people missed at least two years of tax. That was not something they could possibly account for. At least, not unless they sold a relative or two to slavery anyway...

Yet the feudal lord remained as cold as ever, not a hint of emotion or sympathy on him despite knowing that, reminding the adjutant again of why this man was so fearsome.

"It should be about time for our pack of dogs to catch something."

"Yes..."

Gowen analyzed the information he received from his scouts with the time the goblins left to make a prediction.

His adjutant would find something like this divine or godlike, but to him it was just a matter of fact.

"Gather the squads. We shall trample the goblins with those pack of dogs," he said.

"But it's already late, if we go now..." the adjutant argued.

The night was the monsters' friend, so Gowen could understand his adjutant's apprehension.

"Of course, I will be leading. You need only watch the surroundings of the village, and ensure that the fire keep burning."

"As you will."

His gaze ever cold, reason and logic wove within his mind as he sought only to attain the best results.



The ancient beast tamer, Gi Gi, and Hal rode at the king's behest, taking with them 20 of Paradua's iron-legged riders. As a horde consisting purely of riders and beast-tamers, they rode at a speed unknown to those who could only walk. And after only a night of riding, they had already crossed half the journey.

"GURUuu"

The goblins wore a grim face. They had been riding all this time with nary a rest in between. Even the black tigers they rode upon were dyed in the color of fatigue.

But even then, they rode, following the ancient beast tamer, Gi Gi, who rode upon his ^{Triple}Large-^{Head}Horned Ostrich.

When they passed through some thickets, Hal spoke. "Let's rest here for a bit."

"...Understood," Gi Gi said.

He grit his teeth in frustration as he looked toward the direction of the village. If they kept going like this, they would reach somewhere near the village a day later. If so, then it might be possible to rendezvous with the goblins.

As he fed the triple head some dried fruits, he leaned his back to the ostrich's large body and closed his eyes. By doing so, he would only hear the breath of the rider beasts.

—*Rustle

But then the sound of thickets rustling reached his ears, and Gi Gi opened his eyes. From out of the darkness of his vision, he noted a circle of faintly, dazzling green. Opening his eyes just big enough to see a rider beast, he searched around the circle of green light, where he found the breath of man clearly resound.

"...Humans." Gi Gi whispered.

"There's an elf too," Hal added.

The goblins did not know this, but that group of elf and humans was actually none other than Gene's group, who were using the elven path.

"...What a pain. Let's go around them," Hal said, to which Gi Gi asked with his eyes whether it was alright not to finish them off here now. And Hal responded, "What we have to do now is not to protect some elf or hunt some human, but to protect those goblins from the village."

So they woke up their beasts, and they ran away from that ring of green light and rode for the eastern goblin village.



On the morning of the fifth day since leaving the village, war descended like a fierce storm.

Confusion

“The divine god is great!”

“We’re under fire!”

As soon as word of an attack resounded, the spell of confusion came.

Soldiers came in droves without order and attacked them before the goblins could tell what was happening.

“Gi Da, take lady Reshia, and run!” Gi Ga said. “Lord Lili, I leave the rest to you.”

Gi Ga jumped onto his black tiger and rode into the fray. He left Reshia to the spear-wielding Gi Da and the rest of the humans to Lili. As for him, he would deal with the opposing humans himself.

“Three goblins, one group! The humans are nothing as long as we work together!” Gi Ga ordered.

At his behest, the once confused goblins woke up and fought the humans. Goblins were originally stronger than humans. It was only because of the humans’ intellect that allowed them to take an edge over the goblins. So what happens then when the goblins themselves make use of that same intellect? The answer was simple, the humans would fall into a disadvantage.

Moreover—

“What is that goblin!? It’s riding on something!”

The entrance of the never-before seen rider-beast and the goblin with an unusually long arm riding it shocked the men, as he pierced one soldier through the chest with his iron spear, and swung it while it was still lodged into the man. The man’s body flew through the sky before crashing into the ground. Whatever psychological or physical advantage the humans may have gotten at the start was suddenly blown away.

“Onwards!”

Gi Ga led the goblins against the humans who attacked them by surprise. But despite their unfavorable start, Gi Ga’s wise response allowed them to bring the fight back to the humans.



Status

Name	Wyatt Kinoboogu
Race	Human
Level	65
Job	Expert Adventurer
Possessed Skills	Vajra; Shield Rush; Steadfast; Inspire; Sword Mastery B-; Axe Mastery C+; Veteran;
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None

Vajra

—Defense is temporary greatly increased, but physical strength is slightly reduced along with physical attack.

Shield Rush

—Can attack with the shield. The shield won’t be damaged when this ability is used.

Steadfast

—Endurance will recover unless attacked by the enemy. (MEDIUM)

Inspire

- Suppresses the confusion of your allies. (MEDIUM).
- Raises the morale and physical attack of your allies. (LOW)

Veteran

—Critical rate is increased when fighting against someone of a lower class, while defense is increased when fighting someone of a higher class.



Author’s Note:

The boundaries separating man from monster grow ever thinner. Who do you

like the most? The steadily pursuing Gulland, Gowen, or perhaps the eerie Gene?

Intermission: A Calm Strategy

Status

Name	Gi Da
Race	Goblin
Level	36
Class	Rare
Possessed Skills	Spearmanship C-; Knowledge of the Spear; Spear Throwing; Overpowering Howl; Unreasonably Stubborn
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None

By the time Mill and Fick returned to camp, Ranid’s soldiers were everywhere. They looked at each other before deciding to go the center of the camp, where they found the two holy knights glaring at each other.

The atmosphere was so tense it felt like a fight could break out any time.

Surrounded by the soldiers and Wyatt, it was Gulland who first spoke.

“So, why does the iron-armed knight want us to fight with these small fries? Honestly, these men of yours are nothing more than dead weight,” Gullan sneered.

Compared to Gullan’s belligerent attitude, Gowen was as calm as ever. “There are many goblins. It is only reasonable that you use my men to ensure that not a single one slips through. I can’t be at ease unless you take this tenth of my men.”

Indeed, the goblins numbered almost a hundred. Regardless how strong the adventurers are, that was not a number they could completely exterminate. Be that as it may, the adventurers had their pride. They could not just nod their heads and agree to Gowen’s proposal. After all, was it not them who fought the enemy and chased them this far?

“Bastard... Don’t you think you’re being too selfish coming in at the last moment just to take the best part?” Gulland reached for the great sword on his

back.

The adventurers watching from the sides all felt the great bloodlust emanating from the hero-adventurer, and so they braced themselves. If things were to turn for the worse, they might just end up fighting the feudal lord himself.

“Let’s not forget our prior agreement: to use the resources at our disposal to invade the fortress, while trying our hands at rescuing the saint.” Gowen looked down on Gulland with his pair of cold eyes. The chill from those two eyes of his could be felt even through that fiery bloodlust emanating from Gulland.

“Hmph... In other words, you’re saying we’re stupid for getting riled up.”

Gulland’s gaze was sharp yet, but he had already let go of the hilt of his great sword.

“Just do as you please,” Gowen said.

“I will,” Gulland sneered, but Gowen only ignored him.

After seeing the two wrap up their discussion, Fick shrewdly approached Gulland to report their earlier findings.

“Go report to that bastard too.”

“Are you sure?”

Much to Fick’s surprise, Gulland ferociously smiled and then nodded.

“Gather everyone. Gowen isn’t the only one with tricks.”

Shrugging his shoulders, Fick reported to Gowen too.

“Can we trust this intel?” The leader of the Yuan Scout Party asked.

Gowen nodded. “They’re most likely thinking of a way to get one over us, but... That’s alright.”

Narrowing his eyes, Gowen looked toward the direction of the yet unseen goblin horde.

“We will attack the goblins alongside them upon daybreak.”



Gowen's army numbered approximately a hundred as they marched through the forest. They were dressed in leather armor and equipped with a spear or a sword and shield, all of which were provided by Gowen himself.

"There is no need to push yourselves too hard. Their great number will surely make it difficult, so all we need to do is to attract their attention," Gowen said, to which a young man, and then the rest of the boys nodded.

As long as they caught the enemy's attention, Gulland would surely enter the fray. That was a surety for someone like Gulland who froths at the mouth at the thought of securing the greatest merit in this search for the saint.

Gowen thought up this plan knowing that.

Secure the village left behind, and the first of the conditions will have been achieved. After that was a question of which holy knight would rescue the saint. Gene was in the forest, but there were no signs of him. For all Gowen knew he might already be dead or then again he might still be alive, but there was no knowing for sure.

That left only Gowen and Gulland to rescue the saint. Considering the future development of this forest, it would be most advantageous for Gowen to let Gulland rescue the saint.

The holy knight who started out as an adventurer rescued the saint!

Gulland would return to the country a hero, and aspiring young men would look up to him. With that Gowen would be able to use their young, ambitious hearts to develop the forest.

The profit did not lay in this immediate battle, but in the future. As he calmly came up with that plan, Gowen decided to sacrifice these young men he'd raised himself. They would be attacking the goblins from the front to attract their attention, so he knew full well that their losses would be great, but that couldn't be helped.

"It is a pity Gene is not here."

Regret flashed his eyes for an instant before returning to their usual frost, then as he planned coolly in his mind without showing the slightest hint of distress, he gave the orders to attack.



“Over here.”

The spear-wielding Gi Da led Reshia, the humans who left the village, and the female and baby goblins who could not fight. They ran to the west with six other warrior goblins, while Gi Da cut down the branches before him with his spear to create an easier path to traverse.

The goblins they had watching at the back were all elite. They were chosen by Gi Ga himself beforehand, and they all kept going even as the sun shone upon the forest.

The sounds of battle grew more and more distant until half an hour later when they could no longer be heard, and Gi Da finally stopped to let Reshia and the others rest. But there would be no resting for Gi Da and the other warrior goblins, as he ordered them to patrol the surrounding area.

Gi Ga told him to protect Reshia at all costs, so it came as no surprise that Gi Da was more solemn than usual. He could not let his guard up even for a moment.

And then he felt something, bringing him to raise his spear.

“Lord Lili,” he said, prompting Lili to wield her sword as well. “Someone is here.”

Gathering the rest of the goblins, they huddled up around Reshia, and made sure not to make an eek. They stood as still as they could while they perked their ears to catch even the slightest sound in the vicinity.

The sound of the wind swaying the leaves, the sound of the wind itself... Then in that place where no one should’ve been, Gi Da spotted someone: the small figure of a human.

“Name yourself!” Gi Da pointed his spear.

“I have no name to give to a monster,” the small figure quietly said as she brandished her talons. There was anger in those words.

A black mask covered her whole head, while only the vital areas of her body were padded with armor.

“Lord Lili...”

The moment the black figure bolted, Gi Da realized he could not win, but it was too late. The black figure was fast, so fast it made Gi Da wonder where she was getting all that power.

Gi Da struck out with his spear, but the black figure easily slipped past him, jumping over his shoulder as she drew an arc in the air and landed right in front of Lili, who immediately drew her sword.

“Tch... I’m not your enemy!” The figure said as she blocked Lili’s sword with her talons.

It seemed this assailant was severely shocked when Lili drew her sword against her.

“Huh?” Lili was at a lost. The enemy before her did not want to fight her. But then the other goblin warriors came up when they saw Lili in trouble.

“Tch!?”

The black figure dodged the goblins clubs one after another like a butterfly floating in the air, but the moment she landed on the ground, Gi Da’s spear was waiting for her. But even that sudden attack that that figure could in no way have seen coming was dodged by a hair’s breadth. As Gi Da watched the figure make some distance between them, he had no choice but to accept that this was someone far above his level.

“Gi Gi...” Gi Da who was standing before Lili and Reshia to protect them pointed his spear to this unknown assailant. “Lord Lili, please take care of the rest. We will take care of this one, so—”

But the black figure moved before Gi Da could finish talking. In response, Gi Da formed a three-man group with the other goblins to fight off the black figure.

“Go!”

Gi Da struck out his spear with all of his strength, but the black figure easily received his blow. At this point, it was clear as day that that figure’s talons would bury themselves into Gi Da’s flesh, but that was exactly what Gi Da was

aiming for. As the talons reached for his wounded shoulder—

“!?”

—The other goblins swung their clubs, and they slammed them into the legs and sides of the black figure; a coordinated attack that sacrificed Gi Da’s body.

“Gaha... Ku...” Thrown into the ground, the figure squirmed in pain.

Gi Da was on his knees as well, but he somehow managed to stand up with his spear.



“A wound like this...” The figure lifted the mask covering her face, revealing her identity as the mage killer, Mill. A wound like this was truly nothing to her. The Blessing of the Fire God would immediately heal it given some time, but that was also the problem... She needed some time.

“Lord Lili, please go! Run!” Gi Da urged, even as blood flowed from his shoulder, even as the hand he held his spear with was dyed in blood.

“Ku...” Enduring the urge to throw up, Mill calculated the distance between her and Gi Da. If Reshia were to run now, the injury she’d received on her legs would mean that she would never catch up. She needed to overcome this now.

The goblin before her wasn’t in good shape either. He most likely wouldn’t be able to fight well, but he still wrung the last of his strength to finish her after letting Reshia’s group run.

Mill dragged her legs along with the pain on her side. Thinking back on it, she was too impatient. Even if she did fight the goblins to rescue Reshia, and even if she was taken aback with Lili challenging her, she was still too impatient.

Glancing to the side where her fallen mask lay, Mill brandished her talons once again. She would defeat the enemy before her and rescue Reshia. In an instant, all the impatience clouding her judgment cleared up, and her concentration reached its peak.

Like a lone thread strained to the limit, Gi Da who studied the spear under Gi Ga suddenly hesitated to take a step.

Common sense dictated that finishing off a weakened prey was an easy task.

But the pressure emanating from the prey before him now made him hesitate.

Gi Da grit his teeth. What was this sinister pressure? He had to finish her off, if not, he wouldn't be able to accomplish his mission. And yet!

Stifling his fear, Gi Da trudged on. Then as he gathered his killing intent onto the tip of the spear, he made himself forget about the wound on his shoulder, and he closed in on the wounded prey.

But just as he stepped near enough his prey, at that very border where either one of them could hit the other, the high-pitched scream of a human resounded from somewhere.

Immediately, the two warriors, one human, one goblin, looked toward the direction of that scream.



Status

Name	Gowen Ranid
Race	Human
Level	90
Job	Holy Knight; Iron-Armed Knight; Feudal Lord
Possessed Skills	Axe Mastery B+; Sword Mastery B+; Spear Mastery A-; Bow Mastery B+; Leadership; Unlimited Training; Battle-Scarred Knight; Thousand-Demon Slayer; Creator's Blessing; Pursues the Martial Peak; Martial Barrier
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None

Unlimited Training

—Previously translated as unlimited experience. Increases growth, but limits growth rate according to the number of enemies defeated. (LOW to MEDIUM)

Battle-Scarred Knight

—Charm towards those of lower or equal classes. Mental attacks from higher classes are rendered mute.

Thousand-Demon Slayer

—After killing a monster health regeneration up (LOW), attack up (LOW), and defense up (LOW).

Creator’s Blessing

—Charm is increased when leading those of the same race (MEDIUM). The attacking power of the races led is also increased (LOW).

Pursues the Martial Peak

—Previously translated as Seeker of the Martial God. Resistance to magic attacks (MEDIUM).

Martial Barrier

—This should have been translated as something before, but my notes are missing an entry. Can render attacks from every weapon mute (MEDIUM) and increase defense (HIGH) at the cost of greater burden on the body (MEDIUM).

Gi Ga’s level has risen.

89 -> 90



Intermission: The Reaching Evil

Status

Name	Gi Da
Race	Goblin
Level	36
Class	Rare
Possessed Skills	Spearmanship C-; Knowledge of the Spear; Spear Throwing; Overpowering Howl; Unreasonably Stubborn
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None

Mill and Gi Da ran at almost the same time when they heard that scream, but because of her injuries, it was Gi Da who arrived first.

There Gi Da saw that a fearsome adventurer had caught Reshia by the neck, prompting Lili to quickly reach for the sword by her waist. But it was neither her nor Reshia who had screamed just now, but the human women who had followed Reshia.

“GU, GURURUAa!”

Anger filled Gi Da at the sight of the king’s treasure being manhandled, and he kicked off the ground to strike out his spear against the adventurer.

“Hmph.”

But Gulland only snorted as he brandished his sword and easily dodged Gi Da’s spear. In the next instant, blood spurted out of Gi Da, and he fell to the ground.

“Let go!” Reshia demanded, but Gulland only laughed at her.

Then he saw Lili point her blade at him. “What are you doing? I’m not so nice as to hold back against little kids and women.”

Like a voice from hell, it chilled Lili’s heart when she heard it. But enduring the chill running up her back she only prayed she would not shake holding her

sword as she glared at the man before her.

“If you raise your hand against my master, then I will stop you even at the cost my life.”

“Master, huh? You should go play house elsewhere, this here’s my playground, you see.”

Gulland swung his great sword.

Lili found her legs shaking at that, and for a moment she even felt death, causing her to reflexively close her eyes.

But the blade never came, and what resounded next were only the sounds of metals clanging and a tongue clicking.

“...What are you doing?” Gulland asked, to which the assassin answered in a voice filled with more hate than when she spoke to the goblins. “What am I doing? What are YOU doing, Gulland? Let go of her now!”

Mill had jumped over Gulland and attacked him, then after fixing her posture, stood opposite him.

“And if I say I won’t?” Gulland choked Reshia even harder, causing her to choke.

“I will cut those fingers!” As Mill grit her teeth loud enough to be heard, she jumped high up in the air with her talons crossed over each other. Lili wasn’t sure what was going on, but she held her sword anyway and went after Gulland. The both of them together should be enough to deal with one adventurer.

But things didn’t go the way they expected. Gulland’s great sword, heavy as it was, was much faster than they could have ever thought. He easily parried Mill’s attack from above while deflecting Lili’s attack from below.

“What’s the matter girls? Didn’t you want to play? Well, bring it on!”

While Gulland made fun of the two girls, the sound of a pained groaned suddenly reached their ears.

“The hell?” Gulland said looking down on his feet from which a small layer of skin had been cut. It was Gi Da who had cut him. And though it was but a

scratch, that attack had done more than enough: it managed to get his attention. And that was not something Lili or Mill would let pass.

“Tch.”

Immediately, Lili unleashed her Three-Stage Slash against Gulland, who then blocked with his sword, but then sensing another presence from above, Gulland struck up towards the air, but his sword met nothing.

“What?” Gulland said in surprise.

“Over here,” Mill said as she struck out with her talons toward the hand holding Reshia. At that, even Gulland had no choice but to let go and withdraw his hand.

“Lady Reshia!” Mill called out.

Reshia was momentarily shocked upon seeing Mill so earnestly run up to her, but she quickly shook that off and ran up to the wounded Gi Da.

Heal

“Solace to all.”

As that healing light wrapped itself around the goblin, everyone was taken in by Reshia’s heavenly face. The light stopped the gushing of the blood from the wound as it healed the goblin. It was truly a miracle, and everyone who saw it couldn’t help but be charmed. There were even some among the humans who had followed Reshia begin offering prayers to her.

There was a world of difference between Reshia’s Heal and the White Hand of Life’s. When Reshia used Heal a great amount of mana gathered in the area, so much so that it seemed even the spirits would kneel. And the afterglow upon her after healing made it seem as if the world was blessing her. That resplendent figure of hers was truly beautiful.

Her velvety fingers flowed, and light, fleeting like fireflies, followed after them. Then as she gently touched Gi Da’s body, the lights entered him, and life came back to the goblin.

Gulland stepped forward. “That’s a pretty good skill, lady. It makes me want you.”

Gulland spoke haughtily, but Reshia didn’t react, as she only focused on

healing the goblin. But that only roused Gulland's interest even more.

The knight who'd sworn loyalty to her and the assassin with a favor to pay stood before Gulland.

"Why are you stopping me?" Gulland asked.

There was scorn in those words, but more than that was the desire in his eyes.

"I'll kill you," he spat, to which Mill spat back with new found hate, "The feeling's mutual."

At that, Lili also readied her sword, and they both prepared to face Gulland.

"You know if you're worrying whether I would kill that girl or not, you can relax. I took on a job to bring that girl back. There's no way I'd kill her, right?" Gulland reasoned.

"I wonder..." Mill said as her eyes brimmed with killing intent.

"Man, can't a guy get some trust here? But you know we really can't have that girl healing any more goblins than this. If you're not gonna move, then you better stop her."

Though as arrogant as ever, there was some truth in his words that Mill couldn't deny. After all, she had been fighting monsters day after day, so Reshia's behavior was truly not something she could comprehend.

But just when Mill was about to call out to Reshia...

"Just kidding!!" Gulland swung his great sword with both of his arms. Mill managed to defend with her talons, but she still reacted too late, and she had no choice but to take on the brunt of Gulland's attack.

"Kuhaa!" Sent flying by Gulland's attack, Mill crashed into a tree, and then slid down to the ground.

Gulland went after Lili next, but though she managed to block his attack by luck, Gulland's attack dragged her for several meters until her body finally couldn't take it, and she was sent flying along with her sword.

"Now, Ms. Saint, if you would just kindly move your hands away from that

thing.” Gulland said as he pointed his sword at Reshia.

Looking up at Gulland, Reshia said, “There are no monsters or humans before me. If someone is wounded, I will heal them.”

“Oh, how nice. Then in that case why don’t you go and heal those two I just sent flying. I might have held back, but they won’t be moving for a while like that.”

Gulland didn’t mind at all that Reshia was glaring at him, but when he noticed that she had no intention of moving, he hit her on the cheek.

“You’re in the way, girl. You want to heal the wounded? Why don’t you go bring that house playing of yours to those peace-loving idiots. I’m sure those perverted old geezers would happily wave their tails for you!”

“What are you doing!?”

Even as her cheeks ached, Reshia kept her sharp gaze at Gulland, who had brought his sword up.

“You went through all that trouble to heal this thing, but too bad! Because it’s gonna turn into a corpse anyway! Ha ha ha ha!!”

As the wind wrapped around the sword and lightning crackled, the sword spun.

A sword of storms gathered around Gulland’s sword.

“Stop it!” But Reshia fearlessly covered for the goblin.

“G-Gulland...”

“Lady Reshia...”

Seeing the other two girls stand up, Gulland snapped his tongue.

“Tch... Stupid brats!”

But just when Gulland was about to let loose his sword, a cold voice resounded.

“Let loose that sword, and you’ll find yourself guilty of treason.”

“...Gowen Ranid,” Gulland muttered with a sour face as Gowen Ranid leisurely

approached him and the saint with his long sword drawn.

“Reshia Fel Zeal, I presume?” Gowen said to the saint.

“Yes,” she replied.

“Would you do us the honor of traveling with us? It is a request from the king.”

Reshia sent a fleeting glance at the goblins before making her decision. There were women and children amongst the goblin. If she refused here, these men would surely try to take her by force. And with no power of her own to resist, it would be nothing more than a futile attempt.

“If I go will you leave the goblins alone?” Reshia asked not to Gulland but to Gowen. The latter seemed more trustworthy after all.

“...Very well.”

“Please make it so that Master Gulland won’t lay a hand on them either.”

Gowen looked toward Gulland.

“Go bring the saint home, Knight of Storms... You understand what I’m getting at, right?”

“You’re giving up merit of the saint? What are you scheming?” Gulland asked as he gripped his sword.

“I have my reasons,” Gowen calmly replied.

After diligently thinking about it, Gulland agreed, “...Fine. I’ll go back. The goblins ain’t interesting anyway.”

Then as he smiled a fierce smile, he looked toward Mill. “Mill, go guide our saint. I’m sure you can do at least that much, right?”

Mill hated Gulland to the pith of her bones, but her respect for Reshia went above that, so she quietly nodded and approached Reshia. When Reshia’s fingers touched her, a light enveloped her whole body, and in the next instant, her wounds were healed. She’d been heaving and puffing all this time, and yet a mere touch was all it took to bring her back to shape. But what’s more was that the warmth from that light made her feel guilty for keeping some secrets.

“...Thank you very much,” she said.

“I didn’t know you became an adventurer,” Reshia said.

“Sorry, I know I should’ve told you, but...”

After a short exchange, Reshia, Mill, and Lili went together.

“GURUuu... Lord Lili, Lady Reshia!? Where are... you going!?”

Gi Da bellowed angrily when he woke up. Immediately, Reshia tried to warn him.

“No, Gi Da!”

But Reshia’s words were too slow for Gulland’s swift sword.

And all that sounded next were the cries of a monster and the sadistic laugh of a man.

“What have you done!”

Reshia tried to go to Gi Da, but Gulland grabbed her.

“You don’t have to heal it. Take her away, Mill.”

Though pained, Mill nodded and forcefully took Reshia away.

“Forgive me, Lady Reshia.”

She would not let her approach the “monsters” any longer.

“Lili!” Reshia called, and Lili stood between Gulland and Gi Da.

“Isn’t it enough!? This goblin can no longer fight.”

Lili unsheathed her sword, and Gulland walked away sneering under his breath, “Suffer and die for that is the punishment of wounding me.”

Gowen looked at Lili before following after Gowen, but he didn’t say anything. When Lili took a look at Gi Da, she gasped.

Gulland’s attack had pierced his lungs, and his left arm was broken.

—I can’t save him.

But she still stopped the bleeding and bandaged the goblin. When she ran out of gauze, she cut a part of her clothes.

“Forgive me, Gi Da. I have to protect Lady Reshia. You will have to go the rest by yourselves.”

Leaving only those words, Lili stood up.

“I’m sorry... I...”

As she held her fists tight, she cursed her own weakness.

Then she went to the humans who were with the goblins and told them to decide for themselves whether they would go with Lady Reshia or live with the goblins.

The goblins all gathered around Gi Da, and while the humans looked at each other for a moment, in the end, they all decided to go with Reshia and Lili.

There’s no helping it. Every time she thought that she couldn’t help but curse her powerlessness.

“Kuun...”

The gray wolf, Gastra, rubbed itself by her feet as if to console her.

“You want to come too?”

Of course, the gray wolf could not possibly have understood her, but it barked back in response as if to console her.

Chapter 80: The Death of a Warrior

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	1
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Swordsmanship A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv1); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King Bui (Lv40)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

I feel weak.

I wouldn’t even be able to walk if it weren’t for this cloth Lord Lili wrapped around me.

...Walk.

“Gi Da...”

The old goblin who called out to me had a strange expression on his face. I wonder if it’s because of the cold.

When I turned around, the comrades I risked my life to protect were there. I wish I had the strength to answer, but regretfully, I could only shake my head.

The king is there to the west.

Lord Gi Ga entrusted these goblins to me. I must see that they make it to the king.

“I must go...”

Without the strength to say a word more, I could only groan out those few words as I forced myself to walk.

The sound of water dripping resounded.

Oh, come to think of it, I am thirsty... Ah, if I could just reach the king, I would surely be able to drink my fill.

Why... is it so hard to walk?

My breath went ragged with every step, yet still I pushed on, clearing the branches in front to make a path for those behind.

It's cold... So cold...

My strength is waning...

"Ku..."

Tripping on my own feet, I inadvertently leaned on my spear, and as something gurgled its way up my stomach, I couldn't help but let it out because of how sick I felt.

...It was my blood.

So why? Why is it still so hard to move?

And why is it that everything I could see just fine moments ago is now suddenly so hazy.

It almost feels like walking underwater. My legs are so heavy it feels like they're stuffed with lead... Heavy... So heavy...

My strength is waning...

—Walk.

It's dark.

I could see even in moonless nights, so how is it that it's now so dark it feels like there's something covering my eyes?

I can't... go on. Why do I have to walk when it's so painful?

The humans aren't coming anyway...

Humans... Wasn't there someone I had to bring to the king?

Who was it again?

—Walk.

I had to lean onto my spear as if it were a cane to keep myself from falling to the ground.

Why?

Why mustn't I sit down? Even though it's so painful... Even though it's so cold...

The treasure of the king's gray wolf rubbed against my legs.

Are you... encouraging me?

...You shouldn't do that. You'll get blood on you.

—Walk.

Ah, right... The king! Our king!

My free hand was completely numb, every step I took sent blood flowing down my chest, and I couldn't even lift my spear to clear the path... but I pushed on, using my own body to clear the path.

O king! Our king!

It was only by calling that name that I could muster the tiniest bit of strength I had left. Our king... Our king who fights for us...

His valiant figure as he subdued Lord Gi Ga and the rest of us lingers in my heart yet.

O king! Our king! I am coming—

To deliver to you your... our prized treasure—

“GURUuuUGA!”

Then in that darkness, where I could barely see, I suddenly heard the cry of a beast. What was this again? Four legs... this beast... I think I've eaten it before...

Ah... Did it just snarl at me?

The lines between memory and reality started to blur.

I can hear them growling from my right... and my left.

What would Lord Gi Ga do in a situation like this? It was from him that I learned the spear... Ah, yes. Those days were certainly the best.

I can hear someone screaming from behind. Why? Why are they screaming? Why is Lord Gi Ga...

Ahh... Right, it was during that one-on-one battle...

That time... Lord Gi Ga struck his sword toward that sword-swinging human like this.

Yes, just like this.

It was when I fought this beast for the first time that Lord Gi Ga taught it to me.

Yes, now one more time.

Ahh, I can't anymore. My body is about to collapse, so I took back the spear I tried to thrust and balanced myself.

Still... why is it so dark?

If I listen carefully, I can hear the beasts breathing. Ahh, right. Lord Gi Ga did once say I shouldn't follow them with my eyes.

"Gi, —"

Right, just like this.

Then everything went quiet again.

I can walk again—

"—, Gi,"

I threw up blood again. I might have moved too much... But just a little bit more.

Ahh, something big is coming from in front.

It's big, really big... Ahh... I can feel the king.

Our king...

“Gi Da,” a voice called out.

I remember that name, the name the king gave to me... The name that... belongs only to...

It's the king! Our king!

“You did well coming here,” the king said.

Then something big took me into his arms.

Suddenly, the cold left, and it felt warm again.

It was like the sun, shining brilliantly high up in the sky.

“I'm... sorr... King...”

You are our sun... The black flames that... Our...



I watched my loyal subordinate breathe his last moments in my arms.

His arm was crushed, his chest was pierced, yet still he walked on, protecting his horde until he could reach me. The goblins following Gi Da walked over the blood-stained road. They were the old, the females, and the young goblins.

“...Lord Gi Da did his best, my king,” the old goblin said.

“Say no more,” I said, “there's no need.”

Gi Da's body now drained of blood was light, and the bandages wrapped around his wounds had been dyed red until they seemed no different from black. His spear was broken in half, yet its tip was still tinged with the blood of a foe. Seeing him like this, I could tell just what kind of road he walked to get here.

Gi Da fulfilled his duty.

“Burn this memory to your minds, little ones,” I said to the young goblins, “This is the figure of a true warrior.”

As I gave a few words for Gi Da who had risked his life to fulfill his duty, I took the Iron Second from my back and wielded it.

“...You will pay for this, humans! You will pay for this!!”

The sky shook and the earth trembled as I cried out in great anger. As the World Devouring Howl activated, the trees of the forest shook, the birds flying nearby fell to the ground, and large beasts in the vicinity ran away.

Knowing the urgency of the situation, I'd sent out the beast-riders first, and led a horde of goblins myself, but because of the difference in abilities, I ended up going ahead.

Normally, that's not something to be happy about, but just for today, I feel grateful for this power. For it was because of it that I could send off a warrior before he passed.

The seething anger within raged like flames inside my belly.

"Are the humans up ahead?" I asked the old goblin even as the anger could be felt from my breath alone.

"Yes, Lord Gi Zo and Lord Gi De have already been killed. And Lord Gi Ga Rax is currently missing."

What a disaster.

I cried out to the heavens for all that we've lost. The water mage, Gi Zo, the beast tamer, Gi De, and now, the spear-wielding Gi Da.

"I will go ahead. When the rest of the goblins come, give them my orders."

"Yes, King!"

"Tell them to chase out the humans! And carve into their bodies the sin of transgressing upon my land!"

Kicking off against the ground, I bolted off for the humans.

—Found them.

I sense a great crowd squirming.

So this is... human. This presence is human!

You will pay! For all the blood you've shed!!!



The adventurers went around while the feudal lord's army battled with the

goblins from in front with the intention of attacking from behind, but when they did, they lost track of where the goblins had gone, so they split themselves and put up a couple of battle formations.

Then when they received word of the saint being “rescued”, the Herculean Wyatt, the White Hand of Life, and the Wand of Destruction all began preparing to leave.

The battle with the goblins that started in the morning was already mostly over, so the adventurers were now on their way home.

“Anyway, it’s good that everyone’s safe... There were quite a bit of goblins, but at least, we completed our mission,” Wyatt said while Vitz stuffed himself as if they were celebrating.

“By the way, where is the saint?” The White Hand of Life asked.

“She went ahead to the village, Mill followed her to care for her. Actually, shouldn’t you be going too, White Hand of Life?” Hawk-Eyed Fick said.

“I specialize in healing wounds of the body. Wounds of the mind is something that’s always been treatable only by human bonds. God himself says so.” The white Hand of Life meekly laughed.

“Well, she was caught by goblins... Anyway, it looks like Gulland is a hero now, huh,” Hawk-Eyed Fick said.

“Looks like it. I guess we should start calling him hero now,” Wyatt said jokingly with a stiff face.

“Give me a break,” the former knight, Bellan, who hated formalities said.

And then everyone broke into laughter.

“In any case, it’s good that everything ended hap—”

Suddenly, a howl resounded deep into the forest, and everyone’s body stiffened.

“—What was that just now?” Vitz asked.

“Put out the fire,” Wyatt quickly said, “and ready your weapons.”

Wyatt quickly wiped the sweat off his body as he readied his equipment.

“No matter what you do, absolutely don’t make an eek, ok!” Wyatt frantically warned in a way that was completely unlike his usually calm composure.

“Why? Is something coming?” Vitz asked.

“I don’t know... I can’t see either,” Hawk-Eyed Fick said.

“...This might be the strongest one yet.”

Just a short distance away from them was the camp for one of the squads of the feudal lord’s army. Everyone else except for those on watch were already asleep. And of those awake, they were either cooking something or working on their equipment.

Because of how big the feudal lord’s army was, they couldn’t set camp in just one place, so they instead split themselves in several camps of 20 men around the village.

“Are you sure we shouldn’t inform them?” Vitz asked.

“If you go, you’ll be the one to die. Though I suppose if that were to happen then that too must be the will of god,” the White Hand of Life jokingly said.

What a convenient god, thought Vitz, though he didn’t try to object.

As the thickets were pushed aside and something seemed to slip through the trees, a giant shadow with terrifying speed came to view.

“GURUUuuuAaaA a AA!!”

That howl shook heaven and earth as it reverberated under the night sky.

Not a man in the feudal lord’s camp stood still upon hearing that wrathful cry; they all picked up their weapons while shaking in fright.

“Surrender and your lives will be spared!” The monster declared.

To which Vitz immediately thought, Yes please! If it means being spared from this fear. But unfortunately for him, the soldiers of Gowen’s army were too courageous for their own good.

“M-Monster!!”

And when one of them took out his sword, the rest of the soldiers followed.

But that courage was nothing more than foolishness, for a swing of the monster's great sword was all it took to cut down one of them in half, from head to crotch, the thick armor equipped be damned; it was a power that struck fear into their hearts.

What came after was a massacre.

In no time at all, one of the camps of the feudal lord's army was extinguished.

The monster seemed to howl again because of its great anger, but for some reason no one could understand, it almost seemed as if it was howling to forget its grief.

Author's Note:

Gi Da died in action, but did you enjoy his last struggle?

Also, it appears that the king is here, at long last. Could this be the beginning of the goblins' counterattack?

Chapter 81: Gnawing Fangs

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	1
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Swordsmanship A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv1); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King Bui (Lv40)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

“GURUuUuAAaOOOOo!”

The enemy cowered at the sound of my howls.

After destroying one of their camps, I moved on to the next.

Reshia should be somewhere nearby.

I have to find her and bring her back... Not just for mine, but also for the sake of those who’ve died.

“...It’s here!”

When I looked up there was a line of armored men with their spears brandished. They were coordinated and their movements showed signs of great practice; a formidable enemy?

“Push out!!”

Hiding their bodies behind their shields, they struck out their spears through the opening between their shields. It was a formation reminiscent of a

hedgehog.

But that line of sharp spears that could tear into my flesh if I were to crash into it didn't affect my movements in the slightest.

“OOooOOOAAo!”

With great strength, I mowed down their formation, scattering their spears and toppling the humans. Some of them were on their backs now, but I had no intention of showing mercy.

Slipping through the opened gaps between their shields, I struck down every man that came to view, dyeing the black of the night in the red of their blood, gushing from their dismembered limbs and torsos.

“Mon... ster...”

One of the humans whose arm I'd cut, lifted his head and watched with trepidation as I let loose the last blow to claim his life. I watched as he sunk in the puddle of blood, then I looked around me.

Where is she!?

“RESHIAaa!!!”

My voice echoed throughout the forest.



The soldiers were tasked to report regularly, but no word had come.

Gowen knitted his brows at that, and for some reason, his old wounds even ached.

“Hmm... The situation might have turned for the worse...”

Being an old veteran and a holy knight with a long history of achievements, Gowen was not the sort to lose his cool even in the worst predicaments.

“It's a bit early, but send word to Gulland. Tell him to leave ahead of time with the armored carriage,” Gowen said to the messenger.

The soldiers Gowen had set around the village were all promising, young men who had sworn their allegiance to him. There was only one reason for them to fail their regular reports, and that was that something was keeping them from

doing so.

And the only thing that could possibly do that in this Forest of Darkness was...

“Either the orcs attacked or the goblins from this morning did,” Gowen said.

But even an ogre shouldn’t be able to keep even a single rider from bringing word.

In that case, the enemy must have brought a sizable horde and extinguished my men before they could even send word.

“One more thing,” Gowen said to the messenger, “wake up the soldiers and have them gather around the village. Have them assume a tight formation. As for the horsemen, have them call for reinforcements from the fief.”

Quietly gazing into the dark of the night, Gowen quickly put together a plan to use the village and attack the enemy.

“...Wary, aren’t we?” Gulland said.

“So you were awake.” Gowen replied.

He should have been sleeping just moments ago, yet here he was, alert as ever, without the slightest signs of having just woken up. The presence that emanated from him was truly that of a man about to head to battle, and he even fearlessly laughed.

“Take the saint and leave the forest ahead of us,” Gowen said, “I have my own preparations to make here.”

“Hmph... Well, fine, but what about those adventurers I hired?” Gulland said.

“I can’t contact any of my men,” Gowen said, “I doubt it would be possible to contact a group under a different chain of command given the circumstances at hand.”

“Hmm... I see.”

Gulland appeared to be thoughtful for a moment, but not long after, he grinned a big smile and nodded.

“Fine, the biggest prize here is that girl after all,” Gulland said as he looked toward the direction of the biggest house in the village, the house of the king

which Gi Za had asked to be made.

“I’ll be sleeping until then, so just wake me up when you’re ready.” Gulland said before leaving.

“Lowly adventurer, who does he think he is?” Spat one of the guards who was always beside Gowen.

“Let him be,” Gowen said.

“But still! Even if it is for the sake of the saint, going so far as to even ready the armored carriage is just...! We’re just handing all the merits to that man! This—”

The man would have said more, but Gowen’s gaze silenced him.

“...That thing is moving by its own will. Did you notice any bruises or any injuries on the saint?”

“No.”

“The goblins and the orcs are slaves of desire. And yet... there isn’t a single wound on the saint.”

“I’m not sure myself, but... Isn’t that because of the saint?”

“Perhaps, but... There might be another reason. The monster that caught the saint just might be able to think; a monster capable of suppressing its desire.”

“Surely, that’s impossible.”

“A horde of goblins that transcends common sense, a horde of weakened orcs... When you think about it like that, everything starts to make sense.”

“Then... is that monster?”

Gowen gazed into the dark of the night as he fondled his mustache.

“It might just be headed here at this very moment. That’s probably why Gulland agreed.”

“That man actually thought that far?”

“Otherwise, I doubt he would have meekly obeyed. That man’s stronger than me, you know. At least, when it comes to raw strength.”

The guard looked toward the direction of Gulland's shed.

"Gulland Rifenin... The incarnation of hate."

As the corners of his lips rose, Gowen smiled a cold smile to the approaching enemy.



Something is wrong. I've been attacking the brightly lit camps for a while now, but there's no one to be found. These eyes can see well in the dark, but the bright campfires are keeping me from seeing elsewhere.

It's annoying, but I'll just have to crush every single one of them.

Calming myself as I caught my breath, I focused my consciousness. I should be able to feel their presence through the air as long as I'm able to stir them up. There's no way they've already retreated, they must still be here.

But where?

Spreading my consciousness thin like a paper, I searched the surrounding area for humans.

Then something touched it...

"Damn! It's coming!"

The voice of a human, and the swaying of branches, up a tree, 100 meters away from me.

I bolted off.

—Found them!

I measured the distance to my prey with my Iron Second.

"...It's fast!"

"GURUuuuOOAOo!"

I swung my sword down with my cry.

Guardian

"Vajra!"

But the bigger man stopped it with that lump of iron of his.

“Wyatt!?”

“Go! I’ll stop this thing here!”

As the bigger man shouted, the smaller man retreated.

I kicked that lump of iron away as I pulled back my sword to create some distance between us. Then as I kept a watchful eye out, I gathered my thoughts.

Just now, this man said, ‘Go!’ Where would a human most likely go at a time like this? There’s only one answer: to a place with more humans!

“You will let me pass.”

If I waste time here, that smaller man might escape. The bigger man looked surprise when I spoke.

“If you can speak this well, you must be capable of thought.”

“My subordinates, did they not speak as well!”

I slashed diagonally up the iron-like man. The force behind that attack was strong enough to send an average man flying, but the man only swayed a little before reassuming his stance.

That was over half of my strength.

“Sorry, but if I let you pass, my friends will die. Come!”

The man’s spirit was fierce, and I felt chills crawl up me. This man is strong. I can tell even if I don’t want to, but I wielded my great sword all the same.

If he won’t break in one hit, then I’ll hit him as many times as I need to!

Wielding my great sword over my shoulder, I swung it down with great speed. The sound of metal hitting metal resounded in the forest. The man used something akin to a defense technique as he parried my blows with that shield that covered his whole body.

My irritation gradually piled with every blow swung. This man is just trying to buy time. He’s desperately trying to buy time for that smaller man to escape.

‘To protect his friend’, he says... Then why? Why did you kill my people when you could think such things? Gi Da’s death flickered in my mind for a moment, but what really angered me was that I fell for the enemy’s plan, and couldn’t

even break this man's defense. What angered me the most was me!

Enchant

"Turn me into a blade!"

Black flames wrapped around my great sword, and because of the One-Eyed Snake's Evil Eye, the smooth permeation of ether made the great sword appear to flare up.

"Why did you!—"

With a swing of my great sword, I cut down the shield in half, but the man behind that managed to get away in time and wield his axe.

"—Kill my people!!

Jumping high up, I slashed down with the weight and power of my great sword.

"...!?"

The man managed to dodge at the last moment, leaving the tree behind him to be cut all the way to its roots. By the time I turned, there were already other humans with the big man.

"Bellan, Vitz, White Hand of Life!"

Judging from the look of surprise on the man's face, this turn of events must be unexpected even for him, but it doesn't matter. Because nothing can stand in my way!

Fire

Sword

"O sword! Summon forth the flames!"

One of the new men swung a sword clad in flames, but that was not something that could win against my Enchant, and his sword was flicked off when our swords clashed.

But just when I was about to pursue, I felt pain at my feet.

There's a fast one with them!

But—!

Light

"The light of god will show the way!"

Suddenly, light filled my vision.

Chapter 82: Begin

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	1
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Swordsmanship A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv1); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King Bui (Lv40)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

I can’t stop sweating.

That monster was just too scary. I hit it with my sword, but instead of cutting its arm, I just ended up numbing my own. I shiver at the thought of that monster still running around in the dark.

“Are you alright, Wyatt?”

The Herculean Wyatt, renowned for his skill with the shield, but even he could not fully defend against the relentless sword of the monster. They managed to run away with the help of the White Hand of Life’s magic, but it was doubtful the same trick would work twice.

A simple magic that flashed a great light to blind the enemy, forcing the monster to close its eyes and retreat.

“I’m fine, but... I don’t want to fight that thing again,” Wyatt scowled.

Vitz nodded. “Bellan’s sword broke too.”

“To think my sword would actually crack in one hit, I still have much to learn.” Bellan’s countenance as he ran while watching the back was grim. So grim, in fact, that one could tell even in the darkness. But that was only a given, after all all the confidence he had built up to this day was in one fell swoop crushed.

“I wonder if Fick managed to safely run,” Vitz asked.

“Let’s pray he did,” the White Hand of Life said.

Talking among themselves as they ran, they made way for the village where Gulland was. Their only hopes for winning was to surround the monster and overwhelm it with their numbers, forcefully exhausting its strength until it was too weak to resist.

For some reason, however, Vitz could not imagine that monster kneeling.



The night was coming to an end. A faint light could be seen extending from the eastern sky, and the forest was there to greet it.

I chased after that big man from awhile ago and attacked a couple of camps along the way, but by the third and fourth camp, it became apparent that the humans were taking refuge somewhere.

But where?

There were roughly 20 humans in the first camp. The rest of the camps I’ve seen until now seemed to be about the same size as the first one. If so, then taking into consideration the number I’ve killed, it should be a place able to accommodate at least 40 humans.

Could they be at the village? Or perhaps the lake to the north?

Calm down. I need to think. Where would the humans hold themselves up? That watery area the lizard men frequented? Or perhaps they would prefer the village with its houses fit for humans?

But why would they retreat anyway? Did they realize they were under attack? If they did, then there’s someone with a good head among them.

I’ve been running all this time, but it seems I’ll have to gather my thoughts first.

The humans are at the village, and there's not much time. If the humans are gathering, then they must be doing so with a plan in mind. They could be retreating, but they could also be gearing up for another attack. Alternatively, they could be strengthening the village's defense instead. In any case, I have to hurry.

If they retreat, I will pursue.

If they attack, I will stop them.

And if they try to strengthen the village defenses, I will attack before they finish.

It's often said that time is gold. And tonight there isn't a proverb more fitting, for it is exactly time that will decide the goblins' fate and mine.



"Hmph, not too shabby," Gulland snorted as he watched men on horses going to and fro the cleared road.

Gowen's subordinates had skillfully readied the carriage, while also managing to quickly contact the fief.

"It's proof of the feudal lord's excellent planning. Now, we just need to pass the forest, as the feudal lord's true army is waiting for us on the other side."

Gowen was truly remarkable. He not only managed to quickly ready the armored carriage, which Gulland, Mill, Reshia, and Lili would be riding, but he also managed to have the army station themselves by the forest's exit, and have the escorts of the saint patrol the cleared road.

"Now be a good girl, and go in the carriage," Gulland said to Reshia as he urged her in.

Then he turned to Mill. "Make sure you properly protect the saint, alright?"

"You don't need to tell me," Mill spat, and Gulland haughtily laughed.

"You know how to drive a carriage, right?" Gulland asked Lili.

"I can," she replied.

"Then drive this thing. I'll write you a recommendation to the guild once we

get out of the forest.”

As a holy knight and an adventurer, Gulland’s letter of recommendation was priceless.

Lili noted Reshia’s downcast face, but she still nodded. She was worried about her, of course, as she understood how Reshia felt, but this concerned her future too, so in the end, she found herself in a dilemma.

As a knight who has sworn herself for the saint, she wanted to know what Reshia wanted. If Reshia decided to sacrifice all that she had in the human world to live here in the forest, then Lili would stake her life to battle Gulland and Gowen. She would do so even if Mill were to try and fight her.

But when she thought about it, Reshia only lived alongside the goblins because they kidnapped her. She did not come here on her own volition. This simple fact became the seed for Lili’s doubt.

Not to mention that the one ordering her was none other than the holy knight and adventurer, Gulland. A man renowned throughout the country. It was not easy to go against his orders.

In the end, Lili decided to ask Reshia herself. Though she did so with a gaze.

—Are you fine with this?

But she could not read anything from Reshia’s downcast countenance.

“It’s time. Make sure to hold those reins tight,” Gulland said.

But just as Lili was about to urge the horse to go, a soldier’s scream resounded.

“—Enemy attack!!”

When Lili turned around, what she saw were none other than Gi Gi and Hal, one riding on a Triple-Head and the other riding on a black tiger.



After seeing Gene passing through the circular green light, Gi Gi and the young chieftain, Hal, took a long detour and headed for the village. To their fortune, they did not meet any humans along the way and were able to near

the village without having to fight a holy knight.

They saw a great number of humans when they sneaked about to scout the village. They also noted the horses among them, though this would be their first time seeing one.

Gi Gi was surprised at how much the forest had changed. The trees had been cut down, and roads were made in their place, upon which humans traversed on the backs of those mysterious four-legged beasts.

They were not completely clueless, however, as they have heard stories regarding the humans, so they knew that what the humans were doing must be that so-called 'Horse Riding'. Then as the noble class, Gi Gi, looked around, he saw the treasure of the king, Reshia. He also saw the female swordsman who battled Gi Ga. And he saw the both of them being pushed into this mysterious box.

He did not understand what was going on.

But he knew full well that the humans had committed an unforgivable crime.

They had stolen the treasure of the king.

"Lord Hal, let us begin." Wielding his axe in his hands, Gi Gi turned to the young chieftain beside him.

"I am somewhat concerned that the king is not here, but yes... We should begin," the young chieftain, Hal, said.

Gi Gi shook his head. "They have stolen the king's treasure. That is an unforgivable crime!"

Nodding, Hal ordered the iron legs of Paradua behind him to mount their beasts.

"Great warriors of Paradua! Rejoice! For tonight we carry the king's honor on the tip of our spears!"

As they ferociously brandished their spears, they charged into the village toward the patrolling horsemen.

"Onwards!!"

And so, with Hal and Gi Gi at the lead, the curtains upon the human-goblin war were drawn.

Chapter 83: Warriors, Once More

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	1
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Swordsmanship A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv1); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King Bui (Lv40)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

Along the way to the village, a human screamed.

“Over there!”

—It’s near.

I kicked off the ground, and bolted off for the sound of weapons clashing. As I did, I enchanted my sword, and black flames wrapped around it. They burned in the same rage that filled my heart.

“It’s a monster! They’re coming from behind too!”

It looks like they’re fighting someone up ahead.

I filled my arms and my legs with power, and when I was near enough, I slashed down with my great sword, cutting the human in half from shoulder to waist, letting loose a sea of blood that dyed the ground in its hue.

“There will be no mercy for those who resist!” I said while flicking off the blood from my blade.

But the humans did not cower at my proclamation, and instead formed a wall with their numbers, as they brought their shields forward and readied their spear in that “Hedgehog”-like formation they assumed earlier.

If that’s how you want it, then...

“Allow me to reward your courage with death!”

Wielding my great sword upon my shoulders, I ran toward the humans. My aim was the tip of their spears. I would attack in the same moment they did, so I left my flanks wide open to lure them.

When the humans struck out their spears—

“GURUuuOOooooOAaa!!”

I swung my great sword with my howl and broke their spears, but I didn’t stop there. I kept going, and wrecked havoc upon the now disarmed humans, sending forth those with shields with another swing, while I sent the rest on their way with a tackle, then I left them in the dust.

I went through them like a bull, never stopping once, for I knew that the worst case scenario was for me to be stopped. I might have the upper-hand in strength, but the power of numbers is not something that should ever be made light of.

I need to keep making the first move and pull the humans into my pace, or the odds of victory will be low.

“What is that monster!? Is that a goblin!?”

As screams and jeers resounded in the battlefield, I plunged my sword into another man.

As I cut my way through, I gradually closed in on the battle up ahead.



“Enemy attack? What poor timing.” Gowen stood with his hands upon his sword’s pommel as it stood erect from the ground, glaring toward the path ahead.

“I guess I’ll have to go then,” Gulland said as he attempted to join the fray.

“Just go with the carriage,” Gowen said without even turning to him. There was no waste among his words. Saying only what needed to be said, he stood there like a wall ready to stand against whatever might come.

“Mill, you drive this carriage until we leave the forest. Don’t stop no matter what,” Gulland said to Mill before climbing up the roof of the carriage and wielding his great sword, Blue Thunder. His daunting pose as he looked up the path ahead was truly heroic. He looked just like those heroes in tales of old. And despite her dislike for the man, even Mill couldn’t help but be fascinated when she saw that face beaming with ferocity.

“Saying just whatever he wants!” Mill spat upon breaking out of that momentary trance, then she took the reins of the carriage and drove.

“I’m leaving you behind if you fall off!” Mill yelled angrily as she whipped the horse.

“The air reeks of blood and chaos. Yes, it’s that glorious smell of war!” Gulland laughed as the storms gathered around his sword, eagerly waiting for the enemy he would cut down.



The attack of the beast-riding squad led by Gi Gi and Hal dealt a decisive blow to the cavalry, but the foot soldiers that came to help afterwards brought back the battle to the goblins. But that was only a given, for the level ground favored the horses, not the black tigers, so when reinforcements started pouring in, the advantage swung back to the humans.

In the middle of such a difficult battle, it was only Gi Gi who noticed that the box Reshia had been pushed into had begun to depart.

“Lord Hal! Look!”

After slaying a horseman in one hit, and then helping out the other goblins, he approached Gi Gi.

“So that’s the king’s treasure!” Hal said.

“I’ll cover your back. It’ll be faster if you go,” Gi Gi said, then he rode on with his triple head and cut down a foot soldier with his axe.

“Ha ha! If you’re going to let me have the good parts, I’ll happily oblige! Onwards, Paradua!” Hal cheerfully laughed as he held the spear under his arms and charged for the armored carriage. Three Paradua Goblins followed after him, two at the flanks and one at the rear, while he – the young chieftain, Hal – led the charge with his beloved steed at the vanguard.

“They’re aiming for the carriage! Defend it!” Yelled one of the humans who seemed to be a captain.

The humans lined up their spears, but Gi Gi broke their formation.

“Draw your swords!” The human captain ordered. “One-half will handle the ostrich, the other half will handle the tigers! Spears, get yourselves together!!!”

The captain of the humans was by no means a fool. When the formation broke, he immediately called for the foot soldiers to use their shields and swords to block Gi Gi, while the spears fixed their formation.

“Get their attention...” Hal rode with his black tiger directly toward the line of spears. There were trees to his flanks, there was no path to turn.

“Lord Hal!” Gi Gi cried out.

“—Now, spears!!!” The captain ordered.

“Jump, Miou!!!” Hal yelled.

Spears were thrust at the captain’s behest, but as Hal called out the name of his beloved steed, the black tiger jumped into the trees.

When the captain saw that, he laughed. *In that case, we’ll just kill you while you can’t move.*

But in the next instant, that huge grin on his face froze.

“OOooOoOo!” Hal bellowed out.

The black tiger grabbed onto the twisted trees, then without slowing down for even a second, it charged with Hal into the line of spears from the side.

“Impossible!” The captain spat, as he saw the black tiger move in a way completely unthinkable for horses.

“Tear them apart, Miou!” Hal said.

The ferocious fangs of the black tiger sunk into the shoulders of a soldier, causing blood to gush forth and screams to sound, then Hal spun his spear atop his beloved steed, and swept away the soldiers with a swing. After which, the rest of the goblins came to tear the humans to scraps.

Hal rode onwards with the three goblins, as they made their way for the escaping carriage.

“We’ll overtake it and crush the legs of that four-legged beast!”

Hal led the three goblins to overtake the carriage, but when they were about to attack—

“Tch!?”

A throwing knife came flying from the driver’s seat, passing by Hal’s face. It had enough power behind it, so it wasn’t something he could just ignore. More knives came flying his way, and Hal deflected them with his spear, but gradually, he started to slow.

“Now, hit its legs!” Hal ordered as he dodged the knives.

The three goblins were about to thrust their spears when—

Barbatos

“Ravaging storm!”

That was nothing more than a solemn voice, but that was none other than Gulland. He swung his great sword that he wielded atop his shoulder, and the storm that gathered followed the path of the sword, shooting forth toward the Paradua riders.



The distant sound of weapons clashing and a bellowing howl touched upon his memory to recall something crucial. Upon opening his eyes, Gi Ga Rax looked around him.

“Gu—, are you alright?” Caressing Hakuou’s back, he called out to the other sleeping goblins. There were some among them who could no longer move, but there were none among those who could that were not injured.

Even Gi Ga himself was injured. There was a wound on his shoulder, and

another on his side, none of which were shallow.

“Listen... Do you hear that? It’s the king calling out to us. The king has returned,” Gi Ga said, jubilation filling him.

The goblins looked at each other, then they too sharpened their ears.

Before long, they nodded and turned to Gi Ga.

It was as if they knew what Gi Ga was going to say.

“We may be wounded, but we are warriors of the king. A shameful display is forbidden before the king, so... Stand! Fellow warriors!”

At Gi Ga’s words, the goblins stood. Some had broken legs, some had broken arms... Not one of them was unhurt, but they stood all the same, and held themselves up with a sword or spear.

They had fought to let the females and the young of the goblins to escape, but though they were able to push the humans for some time, gradually, the humans’ greater number pushed them back, and they had no choice but to disperse. Gi Ga fought his hardest to protect the goblins, and when it became apparent that the humans stopped, they gathered together and slept.

“Do you hear his voice? Our king is fighting! He fights! So, stand! Fellow warriors! For to us, there is no glory greater than to die for the king!”

Dragging his body, Gi Ga mounted himself over Hakuou’s back, and the goblins followed.

“We are chosen! We are hard! We are warriors of the king!” Gi Ga said. “So, let us go, fellow warriors.”

Fire burned in the eyes of the king’s warriors as they joined the fray once more.

“To battle!”

Chapter 84: Intersecting

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	1
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Swordsmanship A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv1); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King Bui (Lv40)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

“...It’s coming.”

Gowen closed his eyes and listened closely to the sound of battle. When he heard the thickets being pushed through, his eyes suddenly opened.

“GURUuRUuOOOAa!”

What appeared before him was a goblin as big as an orc. It bellowed a ferocious howl as it swung its great sword. For a moment, Gowen couldn’t help but be wide-eyed upon seeing the monster. But it was only for a moment, as he immediately reacted and rolled on the ground to dodge the attack. If not for his assiduoussness in his training, he would not have immediately reacted and pulled out his long sword to narrowly dodge that attack.

The blade grazed past his side, but such a wound was a long way from being fatal.

The goblin’s pair of crimson eyes, redder than the red of blood itself, looked at him.

“So you’re the boss of the humans.” The monster said.

Its voice was heavy, almost as if the very winds of the abyss carried it, but Gowen had already regained his calm.

“I take it you’re the monster that can think then,” Gowen said back.

As Gowen picked himself up, he brandished his long sword.

“Surrender, and the killing will stop,” the monster said.

With the sword wielded high up above its head, the goblin appeared twice his size, yet Gowen did not cower. He wielded his sword pointed to the ground as he assumed a defensive stance.

“The same is true if you die.”

Gowen’s job was to keep this goblin or whatever exactly it was from moving any further. Gulland might be guarding the saint, but that was no guarantee that the saint would be able to safely leave the forest.

As Gowen looked at the monster before him, he wondered. Are there any more monsters like this?

The goblin before him was just too different from the others. The most common type they’ve fought was of course the normal goblins, followed by the rare variant, which numbered three, and then the noble variant, which so far there’s only been one of. That was a considerable army for some horde of goblins around these parts of the forest.

But then... considering how a goblin such as this could appear before him... was it really reasonable to assume that that’s all there was to the goblins’ forces?

“...This was unexpected.”

While they were yet to actually cross swords, if a goblin like this – a lord class perhaps – frequented these parts of the forest, then developing the forest any further now would prove to be problematic.

The right course of action would be to leave the forest as soon as possible, preserving as much of his forces as he could, then slowly whittling down the monsters of the forest from the edge of the forest. But in order to do so—

“What’s the matter? Why aren’t you coming?”

He would first have to defeat the imposing foe in front of him.



The man before me seems to be the boss of the humans. His relaxed stance showed no openings. And though I hold my sword above my head, appearing as threatening as one could be, the man stood unwavering, even talking back to me calmly.

Even though he looks like a butler with that combed down silver hair of his and that mustache, the feeling I get from him is undoubtedly that of a powerful warrior.

“If you won’t surrender, then—”

If he thinks he can stop my blow, he is horribly mistaken. Come! Feel the weight of my sword!

But while I filled my muscles to the brim with power as I lifted my sword, eager to bury my blade into the man before me, the shouts behind me kept me from making my move. My subordinates are probably fighting there.

I don’t know which one, but it’s either the beast-rider horde I sent ahead led by Gi Gi and Hal or the survivors of the village. Either one is bad.

What do I do?

Do I try and kill the man in front of me now? Or do I help them first?

The beast-rider horde have few goblins in their horde, while the survivors of the village are bound to have suffered heavy casualties.

...I’ve decided.

My goal is to take back what’s mine. I have a lot to pay the humans back for, but I don’t want to lose any more of my men.

I’m probably still too far from this man’s range. Moreover, he’s not coming. That’s good.

Immediately, I turned around and bolted off, sweeping away the humans that blocked my way.

—Please make it in time. I don't want to lose any more than this!"

The humans jeered as I ran away.

Then in no time at all, thanks to my strengthened muscles, I was there at the battlefield where my subordinates fought.

"King!" Gi Gi ran up to me as soon as he saw me.

Battling against these foot soldiers with these numbers must have been a challenge.

Gi Gi was dyed in red and a thick steam could be seen rising from his whole body as he approached me. He looked reliable.

"Are you alright!? What about Hal!?" I urgently asked.

"He went ahead to recover the king's treasure," Gi Gi replied.

Without intending to, I grit my teeth when I heard those words.

"Where!?" I asked.

"Up ahead... Just leave this place to us, King," Gi Gi said.

"I leave it to you then!"

We both know it's dangerous, but still... Reshia is near! If I stretch my hands just a little further, I can reach her!

Sorry... Just hold on tight, goblins. I will save her and get back to you as soon as I can!

"As you will," Gi Gi said.

"You are to hold this area, Warriors of Paradua! Endure just a little bit more! Muster your courage and fight!" I bellowed out to the warriors before I left.

Then I ran... I ran so fast it seemed like all my earlier movements so far were a joke.

"RESHIAaAa!!"

I ran through the blood stained road as I called out her name.

Will it reach her?

Wait for me, Reshia. Wait for me just a little bit more.

I don't care if this is destiny or fate! Whatever it is I will tear it apart!



“Ugh... What a disaster.”

Hal held his spear tight as he looked down on the three goblins of Paradua, laying lifelessly on the ground. His poor judgment had cost them their lives.

But he didn't have the time to regret. He was already chasing that four-legged thing that was tugging along that carriage. It didn't matter that the previous attack was as strong as Rashka's, that carriage needed to be stopped, and there was no other way to do so but to chase it.

“The first of Paradua's Spear enters!” Hal announced his entrance to encourage himself as he passed by the horses.

He was right at the heel of the target. That earlier attack was strong, but Hal figured that an attack like that couldn't possibly be used right next to the carriage. The humans wouldn't possibly let themselves get caught in their own attack.

Hal was further convinced of his hypothesis when no attack came when he neared the carriage.

“I will— What!?”

But just when he was about to strike down the horses, a short dagger came flying at him, burying itself into his shoulder. When he looked up to the front seat of the carriage, he saw a small human wielding a dagger, around which was the bridle of the horses fastened.

“Sorry,” the human said.

“NUuuAAaa!” Hal screamed.

Dagger after dagger buried into Hal and his beloved steed, Miou, forcing them off the humans' trail.

Hal was a chieftain, however, and the moment he realized his spear wouldn't reach the horses, he threw it. He did not have the luxury of taking the time to

aim, but his spear still managed to graze one of the horse's leg before it buried into the ground, slowing down the carriage.

"Tch... Darn."

Mill took the bridle again after ensuring the coast was clear.

"The horse is injured," she yelled to Gulland, "we need to change horses or the horse will die!"

"...Don't stop! Keep going!" Gulland said back.

He was sitting at the roof of the carriage, allowing him to see much more than Mill could. Gulland's lips twisted into a fierce smile.

"Cavalry up ahead. They're here to welcome us," Gulland said.

Mill heaved a sigh of relief when she saw the heavily armed cavalry approaching.

—We're saved.

But then why weren't they stopping?

There were at least 30 in the approaching cavalry. It was not the main force yet, but it was one of the strongest forces from the western fief.

But while she was wondering, Gulland suddenly laughed. "It's here! Ha ha ha! The big one is here!"

Reflected on Gulland's eyes was the king of goblins chasing after them.



The carriage is up ahead.

—I've caught up!!

Iron Second brimmed with ether as I eyed the cavalry passing by the carriage.

Enchant

"Turn me into a blade!"

The human cavalry stirred up clouds of dust as they ran at me.

When our distances zeroed, and our paths crossed—

"Screw off!"

The first battle was with the vanguard. The human struck out his lance, but it only passed by the side of my face, as I struck back in turn. With my great sword clad in ether, I tore through the human like a piece of paper.

—Don't stop!

A second and third lance came right after the first. In response, I invoked my ether.

Accel

“My body is like a cloud of dust!”

Using my great sword as a shield, I invoked Accel to pass through the cavalry in one go, brushing aside the horses I touched before quickly stopping in front of the knight before me.

“GURUuuuOoooo!”

Ignoring the recoil, I swung my great sword from below to blow away the horse along with its rider before invoking Accel again.

“Turn around! Don't let it reach the carriage! Protect the saint with your honor on the line!” One of the knights said.

And from that I knew.

Reshia is here!

I wrung out every bit of strength I had as I kicked off the ground and filled my legs with ether.

That explosive sensation pushed me into what felt like a wall of air.

But even as that wall pushed against me, I channeled Accel even harder.

It was hard to breathe while being pressured by that wall, but in no time at all, I managed to shorten the distance to the carriage.

But still... I can hear the horses' hooves kicking against the ground as they neared me. Breaking through with the temporary speed boosts from Accel was indeed not an easy task.

The longer this battle goes on with these horses on my trail, the worse off I'll be.

They're nearing me! Looks like they've also brought their best!

"DieeEee!"

I swung my sword behind me in a desperate attempt to defend.

"King!"

"Gi Ga!?"

But then Gi Ga suddenly jumped out of nowhere, riding on the back of a beast-rider, to keep the knights from approaching any further.

"Kill the king's enemies! Don't let even a single one pass!" Gi Ga said.

More goblins appeared as he said that. Not one of them was uninjured, but they grit their teeth and blocked the approaching knights all the same.

"Breakthrough!!" Yelled one of the knights. "Kill the big one!"

I'm... I'm... I'm going!! Gi Ga!

"Watch my back!"

Don't die... I found myself wanting to say, but I kept those words from coming out.

After seeing Gi Da's death, I know that it's exactly by putting one's life on the line that one can fight hard.

But still... I hope they survive.

Losing loyal retainers is a great loss for me.

Keeping one's warriors alive is needed for a king to realize the path of conquest.

Which is why I will only chase this carriage up till the brink of the humans' territory. After that I'll have no choice but to retreat. I can't just stand idle while my subordinates die one after another in the forest.

Saving Reshia is nothing more than my selfishness.

But despite that, my subordinates are willing to put their lives on the line.

As I thought that, I filled my legs with ether.

“NUUuuOOOAOaAAa!”

I filled them with so much ether it felt like they would explode.

I lost my arm during the battle with the ogre lord trying to do two things at the same time with my ether, but after evolving, I should be able to do it now.

Cracks appeared on the level ground. My whole body was supported by my left leg as my right lifted. Ether exploded behind my right leg, pushing me forward.

A wall of air greeted me once more, as I lifted my left leg and my right descended to support me.

With Accel and my ether-reinforced muscles working together, I moved at a speed unknown to those on horse. And in the blink of an eye, I was nearer than ever.

—Just a bit more!

Running as fast as I could that even my breathing stopped, I was finally right behind the carriage. I just needed a little bit more and my hands would reach her.

But the heavens were cruel, and it was at such a time that a man appeared to call upon a storm.

Astaroth

“Ruler of Wind and Lightning!”

Suddenly, wind and lightning filled my vision



Level has risen.

1 -> 3

Gossip: An Ordinary Day in the Tribes

Status	
Name	Kuzan
Race	Gordob Goblin
Level	50
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Kairaishi; Prophecy Death
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Abnormal Status	Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

Kuzan, the priestess of the Gordob, tasked by the king to take care of the fortress in his absence, was currently sweeping the fortress grounds.

It was a holy place, after all, and as the person responsible, she could not allow it to remain messy.

“Good day,” the oldest of the chiefs, Aluahliha said.

He was no longer a chieftain himself, but he was still a warrior; his duty was also to protect the fortress.

Normally, leaving behind a chief would have been enough to defend the fortress, but Kuzan was not a fighter, so the king decided to leave the old Aluhaliha behind.

“Greetings, Grandpa Aluhaliha,” Kuzan said with a smile.

That was the first time Aluhaliha saw the ever serious priestess of Gordob smile. And to him it was truly a dazzling sight.

She’d been holed up all this time, so he thought for sure she’d never smile from the bottom of her heart, yet here she was smiling cheerfully like the young girl she was as she swept the floor.

The old chief couldn’t help but let his face slacken upon seeing that, but when he realized what he was doing. he quickly knitted his brows. He didn’t want to lose his tough appearance.

“You’ve been dropping by frequently lately,” Kuzan said.

“I just felt like it... I brought some meat, by the way. Why don’t you go eat with the others,” Aluhaliha said as he handed the meat of the spear deer he got along the way. Interestingly enough, the part of the meat he handed was the most nutritional part: the liver.

“Grandpa, thank you!” Kuzan said as she happily accepted the meat.

Aluhaliha thought meat would be rare for the Gordob, as they were a tribe known to stay within their caves. Seeing Kuzan so excitedly accept the meat he brought proved his conjecture true, and his face once again slackened.

“Everyone! Grandpa Aluhaliha brought us meat! Let’s eat first!” Aluhaliha happily watched as Kuzan ran to the others and called out to them.

“Who would’ve thought she’d have a side like this to her,” Aluhaliha muttered.

Then suddenly another voice resounded.

“Who would’ve thought, indeed,” the voice said.

Aluhaliha jumped at the voice; he seemed paler than if he’d seen a ghost. When he turned around, he saw that it was Yellow. The small-bodied Yellow, who was both Kuzan’s father and her aide in leading their tribe. For some reason, however, the small goblin’s gaze toward Aluhaliha was unusually cold.

Any other day Aluhaliha would’ve been sure he could easily win against Yellow in a fight, but for some reason, he actually winced at the small goblin’s gaze. It was something he found confusing despite his long years in the hunt.

“...Yellow, it’s you.” Aluhaliha said, trying to make his voice as dignified as could be.

But Yellow’s gaze only grew colder.

“Yes, it’s me, Yellow, Kuzan’s only blood-related father,” Yellow said.

Aluhaliha couldn’t understand why Yellow would bother bringing up Kuzan’s name, but he also couldn’t help wince once more when he did.

“Can I help you with something?” He asked.

“No, you seemed free, so I called out,” Yellow matter-of-factly replied.

There was a coldness in his voice that intimidated the old chieftain warrior.

“I’m not actually that free, I’m just...” Aluhaliha stammered.

“Oh?” Yellow said.

It was but a single word, yet that single word emanated a strange pressure that seemed to make the small goblin bigger.

Aluhaliha blinked his eyes, unable to believe what he was seeing.

“Lord Aluhaliha, as the oldest of the Paradua tribe, and the most valiant warrior in the previous battle, and! —”

Yellow seemed to be praising him, but that sudden increase in volume made Aluhaliha draw cold sweat.

“—As the oldest chief among the four tribes, the goblin with the greatest influence even when compared to the Gaidga or Ganra, would you mind if I ask your opinion regarding a certain... matter?”

Sounded more like a threat than a question, Aluhaliha thought.

“S-Sure...” Aluhaliha found himself meekly saying.

He was long past the point where he could yet regain his dignity.

“What do you think of an old goblin, who happens to hold illicit feelings for a very, and if I may emphasize, very young girl; going as far as to use his authority to reach out to this pure maiden in hopes of satiating his own selfish desires... What does the great Aluhaliha think if such a dirty and corrupted and vile goblin were to be among the ranks of our four tribes?” Yellow asked.

It didn’t really seem like he was asking his opinion though, Aluhaliha thought, In fact, it pretty much felt like he was pushing his own opinion onto him, but regardless, the most Aluhaliha could do was to nod his head in agreement.

“R-Right... Such a goblin certainly deserves to be punished.”

“You think so too, Master Aluhaliha? As expected of someone with such grand caliber.”

Aluhaliha was taken aback by Yellow’s theatrics, and the devilish smile he saw

on Yellow's lips sent shivers down his back. It was a kind of fear he had never felt despite his long years as chieftain. A fear that sent his eyes darting the moment Yellow placed his hands over his shoulders.

"I hope you do not – ever – forget those words," Yellow said in a hushed voice, but there was a fire hidden behind them that made Aluhaliha nod despite not truly understanding.

And then Yellow walked away.

"Good grief..." Aluhaliha said, seemingly exhausted, "I think I'll go take care of the black tiger cubs when I get back."

Then a happy voice called out to him.

"You have black tiger cubs at home!?" The voice said, obviously belonging to Kuzan, as Aluhaliha confirmed upon turning around.

"Y-Yes... They were born just a few days ago. They're very important treasures to our tribe," he said.

"Wow, that's amazing. Can I see them?"

"Sure, drop by anytime. They can't walk yet, but they've already grown their fur. I say this is when they're the cutest."

"Yay! Oh, but... I can't walk very fast."

Kuzan was crestfallen when she realized meeting the cubs wouldn't be possible, but Aluhaliha quickly brought her spirits up by offering her a ride on his own riderbeast.

"Why don't you ride with me then?" He suggested. "If you come with me, we can make it in less than half a day."

"Really!? You're the best, Gramps!" Kuzan said as she hugged the old chieftain, at which he smiled and said that it was good to go out from time to time.

A happy atmosphere seemed to emanate from the two, but contrast to them, there was currently a cold gaze freezing from behind a pillar.

Dark ether emanated from Yellow as he watched the two embrace. That aura

was so terrifying it sent the Gordob goblins that passed by running and screaming.

Intermission: A Forged Strength

Status

Name	Gi Go Amatsuki
Race	Goblin
Level	65
Class	Noble; Subleader
Possessed Skills	Sword Mastery B-; Self-Made Man; Veteran; Chivalry; Warrior's Soul
Divine Protection	<div>La</div> <div>Paruza</div> Sword God
Attributes	N/A

Self-Made Man – The requirements for evolution is greater, but the resulting boon after evolution is also greater.

Veteran – Critical rate is increased against opponents of lower class, while defense is increased against those of a higher class.

Chivalry – Charm is increased against all races. (LOW)

Warrior’s Soul – During one on one battles stamina is increased and skills have higher chance of occurring.

“Too fast.”

When Gowen realized that chasing the goblin wouldn’t be happening, he looked around him instead. The rummage left by the chaos that goblin spread was worst than he’d expected. Everything in its path was mowed down altogether without question. The sight made even him start wondering. Should he keep on fighting? Or should they retreat?

Who would’ve thought such a thing would be lurking right next to his territory, Gowen thought when a soldier approached him.

“I bring word from the scouts to the west, Lord,” the soldier said.

“Speak,” Gowen urged the soldier to speak without any hesitation.

“A horde of goblins approaches from the west; their number: approximately 100 goblins.”

“...Is this the same horde we previously defeated?”

“No, Lord. Their numbers include many unfamiliar types. The scouts believe it to be a different horde.”

“Perhaps, it’s their main force.”

Stroking his mustache once, Gowen closed his eyes and knitted his brows, then almost immediately after, he gave a command.

“Have the soldiers retreat from the village. Yuan will lead.”

“As you command!”

“I will watch the back. Now, hurry! This is a battle of time!”

At Gowen’s behest, the soldier quickly stood up and left with the other messengers to bring word to all their forces.

“Yo, Mr. Iron-Armed Knight. You seem really busy,” a familiar voice unreservedly said. The voice itself seemed enthralled, while the eyes of its master looked mad as they darted to and fro the surroundings in search for prey. The sword in his hand, Fifire, trickled with blood even as the man held it still.

“I came across some gobs and orcs along the way; I think I took out 20 of them myself. Ahh, I just can’t get enough of killing! ...So did I make myself useful, hmm, Iron-Armed Knight?” Gene said.

“While I won’t reprimand you for your odd... disposition, there’s not really much to praise in killing a bunch of small fries... regardless how many,” Gowen provokingly said.

Gene smiled when he heard that. Such provocation sounded almost like a plea to die to his ears. And naturally, he was neither the type to refuse nor ignore such a plea.

“Ho...”

“And so, I believe I have a job more... suitable for your skills.”

“You have a tastier prey for me?”

‘A prey tastier than you’ is precisely what those words implied.

“A goblin above a lord class,” Gowen nodded.

“Hmm... And on what basis do you say this goblin is greater than a lord?”

Hera, the goddess of wisdom’s, light seemed to return to Gene’s entranced eyes upon hearing Gowen’s words. A goblin greater than a lord should not exist, that was common sense. Yet if it did exist, it would be an existence straight out of the legends. Perhaps it might not compare to someone like the veteran, Gowen, or the holy knight adventurer, Gulland, but to Gene, who truly loved the hunt, such a monster was more than enough to rouse his interest.

“It was colossal even compared to all the goblin lords I’ve seen. Moreover, the seal of the Goddess of the Underworld was on its right arm, while in its left hand was an orb I’d never seen before.”

Evil

God

“In other words... A goblin king?”

They knew of the orc king’s existence since its appearance some decades ago, but a goblin king was unheard of.

“Perhaps... But even without it, the food chain in this place is just too strange. The orcs are weak, while the goblins reign strong... Something like that is unheard of.”

Gene became thoughtful at Gowen’s words before his face broke out into a huge grin.

“Well, alright. Let’s just say I believe this fairytale monster of yours. So, where is it?”

“Up ahead. It should be chasing after the saint.”

“Seriously? Darn... What a pain,” Gene said, seemingly complaining, but there was a calmness to him that spoke otherwise.

“Well, I’m off then. It’s time for the Lightning-Fast Knight to make his entrance!” Gene said, his eyes once again entranced.

“I suppose,” Gowen said.

“I bring grave news, Lord! The fourth platoon has fallen to the goblins! Casualties are rising! And the soldiers are requesting reinforcements!” A

messenger said.

Gene smiled when he heard that report.

“Do watch my back, Iron-Armed Knight,” Gene laughed loudly as he pulled Selena’s hair. “Open a path that will bring me to the end of this road!”

The elven maiden appeared haggard, but she opened the path all the same. She was clearly spent well beyond her means, but Gene had forcefully fed her the blood of a demihuman to increase her strength.

In fact, the elven road wasn’t actually something that could be opened at will. It was only thanks to the demihuman’s blood that she could do what she was doing now. As for what side effects awaited her, not even she herself knew.

Unfortunately, the collar around her neck made it impossible to revolt, so she had no other choice but to pray and open the path. As she did, the nearby vines gathered into the shape of a gate.

“See ya,” Gene smugly said as he stepped through the gate.

“Hmm... Luck seems to be blowing my way,” Gowen muttered.

If so... He brandished his sword.

“Yuan, I give you temporary command of the army. I will go support our men.”

The Iron-Armed Knight made his move.



After receiving directions from the old goblin, Gi Gu Verbena mercilessly led the horde against the humans.

“Don’t let even a single one of these human scum go!”

Gi Gu howled in his fury as he called death upon the humans.

“Slaughter them!”

With Gi Zu, Gi Do, and the rest of the rare class goblins in tow, they cut down the humans as soon as they saw them.

Gi Gu Verbena swung his axe with the ferocity and power of a noble class. The

humans wore armor made of iron, but it mattered little, as the contents were flesh all the same. When Gi Gu's axe descended on one of the humans, the iron helmet bent under the terrifying prowess of his axe, crushing the human head contained within.

"Goblins! And there's a lot of them!" The soldiers screamed as the goblins slaughtered and surrounded them.

The humans may have made camp in the flatlands, but they were still within the forest, and the forest was home to the goblins.

To make things worse, the humans had their guard down after previously winning against the goblins and seeing the king move by himself. They thought the war was over. Never did they expect that the previous battles were merely an overture to the true battle at hand.

And so, when Gi Gu Verbena led his goblins to battle, it did not take long for the battlefield to turn into a pool of human blood.

The goblins originally had the advantage in strength, so when they fought with wisdom, the humans fell back. And in no time at all, they were driven into a predicament.

"Hide behind the wagons! Call for reinforcements!"

Fortunately or unfortunately depending from which perspective one looked, the Herculean Wyatt, who ran because of the king, had ended up here.

He took the panicking humans and ordered them create a barricade from the wagons' cargo.

"Calm yourselves, men! Hide behind the barricade and wait for the goblins to approach. When they near you, thrust out your spears!"

Air

Slash

"The wind sings!"

The wind mage, Gi Do, casted his spell, but—

Guardian

"Vajra!"

Wyatt managed to block it with his skill and the shield of a fallen soldier.

But compared to Wyatt the real headache was the white Hand of Life, who

healed everyone at the center of the camp. Because of her the soldiers kept coming back to battle until they were killed.

In contrast, the goblins had to fall back the moment they were injured. It was not a battle Gi Gu Verbena could prevail in easily even with his high leadership skills.

Yet hope had not been snuffed out for the goblins. In fact, Gi Gu Verbena had actually been fighting leisurely all this time, and for good reason: he was waiting for the other hordes to come.

Rashka of Gaidga, with his great strength, Gilmi and Narsa of Ganra, who could fight from the distance.

The moment their tribes arrive, the whole battlefield would be turned upside down.

There was no reason to push themselves, but there was no reason to idle either, so Gi Gu strove to battle the humans while minimizing their losses.

As Gi Gu Verbena formulated a plan by himself, the goblin encirclement around the humans gradually grew tighter.



Whereas Gi Gu Verbena chose to attack the nearby humans, Gi Go Amatuski decided to take the wide-eyed Gi Jii, the stealthy Gi Ji, and a paltry force of goblins to quickly reach the village.

The humans were detestable, yes, but to Gi Go, the fact that the king had gone ahead was of greater importance.

“We must hurry to the king,” he said.

Most of the normal goblins from the Gi Village went with Gi Gu Verbena, while Gi Go took a paltry force with him to hurry to the king.

Gi Go did not want to follow another noble class like himself, so instead, he decided to leave most of the forces to a friend who could lead well.

Gi Gu accepted his proposal, and he told the wide-eyed Gi Jii to go with him along with the others as a farewell gift.

“Enemy, ahead, 15...” Gi Ji said.

Gi Ji would take advantage of his specialty in covert ops to scout ahead, allowing the small horde to quickly kill off the enemies in their path.

“Those who block the way, only have one fate: to be cut!”

Quickly unsheathing his curved sword, Gi Go Amatsuki ran up to the unsuspecting humans and attacked them. The whispers of the Sword God allowed Gi Go’s swordplay to shine.

The humans wore armor all over their body, but there were still gaps here and there. Such a thing was necessary so as to not impede their sight or movement. Which also goes to say that the parts near their joints were particularly undefended. And it was exactly those small gaps that Gi Go took advantage of.

As his curved sword swung, it went straight for the dominant elbow, cleanly lopping off the arm of the enemy. The human screamed at the pain of losing his arm, but by then, Gi Go’s sword had already pierced his eyes, bringing him the peace of death.

The soldiers nearby quickly struck out their sword and spear, but Gi Go allowed his body to fall to dodge them. At the same time, he struck out his sword to cut at the back of their knees, causing the soldiers to fall to the ground. But before they could ever hope to reach it, their heads were already severed from their body.

Blood rained as the humans fell down, and as the ground dyed with red, the whispers of the Sword God grew ever stronger.

—More... More, more! More! More! I want a strong foe to cut! I want to cut someone strong! I want to reach the heavens with my sword!

Those thoughts grew stronger every passing day. And every time he cut someone down, the thirst grew stronger.

—Isn’t there anyone strong? A strong foe like... like... like the king.

Gi Go’s hair stood on end when he imagined himself fighting the king. He immediately shook his head as if to force away those thoughts.

The king was an existence he should serve; he was not someone he should fight, nor yearn to fight.

“Not bad.”

The sound of that low voice awoke Gi Go from the Sword God’s whispers. When he turned around, what greeted him was a silver-haired man with a mustache calmly walking toward him. The human looked older than those he’d fought, yet the aura he felt emanating from him was far graver than any he had come across yet.

“What is your name?” Gi Go asked.

The man’s brows slightly raised up when he heard Gi Go’s question. Apparently, he did not expect such a request.

“Gowen Ranid, a holy knight,” the man introduced himself.

“Gi Go Amatsuki,” Gi Go said back in courtesy.

After greeting each other, the two warriors brandished their weapons as they closed in on each other.

“Lord Gi Go,” Gi Jii called out as he attempted to surround the human along with Gi Ji and Gi Go.

“This is a one on one duel. Do not interfere,” Gi Go said, but his eyes did not leave Gowen for even a moment.

Then Gi Go bolted for the man.

As Gowen held his long sword with one hand and took on a lower stance, Gi Go wielded his curved sword between his armpits to hide it. One took on a stance to receive any blow, while the other took on a stance to make a quick attack.

Gowen came here to help his men, so it was only natural that he would be thinking of the battles to come. It was because of that that he decided to use a defensive stance; he could not allow himself to be injured. And with the iron armor to protect him, he was certain that the enemy before him would aim for its weak points.

Their bout lasted only for an instant. When Gi Go’s curved sword flashed from

the left, Gowen's long sword reached for the goblin's throat... but that was exactly what Gi Go was aiming for.

"Die!"

Suddenly, Gi Go stopped his body from moving to the left, dodging the oncoming sword by a hair's breadth, to then launch another attack toward the enemy's side. A normal human would surely bring back his sword to protect himself, allowing Gi Go to finish him off, but...

What happened next was something Gi Go could never have expected. The enemy took back his sword quicker than Gi Go could charge, brushing off Gi Go's attack, and cutting at his legs in a straight line from left to right before finally finishing the flurry of attacks with a thrust to his shoulder. As the man took back his sword, Gi Go fell to the ground.

The speed of their swords were too different. But unlike Gene, this was not a power the man borrowed from his weapon, but a power he gained after arduously training day after day. A skill known as Martial Barrier, a skill he earned from sheer hard work.

"Lord Gi Go!?" Gi Jii cried out as he stood with Gi Ji to block the man. With two goblins, two of which were rare, their power surely wasn't weak, yet...

"Stop it! You can't win against him!" Gi Go told them to stop.

But it was not possible to retreat. In the next instant, Gi Jii and Gi Ji bolted for the enemy. They attacked from both sides; Gi Ji took the enemy's attention, while Gi Jii attacked. It was a combination attack taking advantage of the two skills: Meld and Cooperation; and yet Gowen destroyed them without even breaking a sweat.

Gi Ji's blow was repelled with a single blow, while Gi Jii's attack was stopped by the enemy's iron arm. After which, the sword that sent Gi Ji flying was used to cut Gi Jii's legs before piercing his shoulder in the same manner Gi Go was injured.

"Bastard!"

Gi Ji ran at the man once more, but he was beaten in the exact same manner as Gi Jii. By this time the normal goblins had frozen up in fear. They knew full

well how strong goblin rares were, and yet here was a man who could treat even a noble like a child.

“Ku...”

Gi Go forced himself to stand and fight.

—Just one blow!

Gi Go jumped with his sword to slash at the man, but in return, the only thing he got was a line from his cheeks to his brows that dyed his vision in red.

“That’s enough...”

After seeing Gi Go’s paltry group fall, Gowen no longer fought and instead walked again toward the people he meant to aid. But as he walked, the soldiers who came with him asked.

“Should we finish them?” One soldier asked.

Gowen shook his head. “I intentionally left them alive. Leave them alone.”

“But...” The soldier did not seem convinced.

“Do you not understand why I left them alive?” Gowen asked.

“Apologies, Lord.”

“They are not normal monsters. The goblin that leads them is able to think. If so, then that peculiarity should have an effect to the rest of its horde... Since the goblins I left alive can no longer move, isn’t it only normal that someone would carry them?”

When the soldier heard his answer he shook, and again he remembered that the seemingly ‘old man’ in front of him was a veteran who has walked through countless battlefields.

He intentionally left the goblins alive, even going as far as to specifically hinder their ability to walk, to force their brethren to save them, effectively reducing their numbers, and thus, allowing them the leisure to withdraw their army.

Gulland might be stronger, and Gene might be crazier, but when it came to the battlefield, no one knew better than the Iron-Armed Knight himself.

“Understood,” the soldier finally said after being enlightened.

The soldiers shivered as they followed the holy knight.

Chapter 85: Her Hand

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	3
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Swordsmanship A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv1); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King Bui (Lv40)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

Lightning flashed before me.

Enchant
“Turn me into a blade!”

I tried to brush away the lightning with Iron Second, but the moment my black-flame clad sword hit it, a piercing heat penetrated me.

Breathing became difficult under its terrifying pressure, and I couldn’t help but look down for a moment as I grit my teeth.

“...Gu!”

I kept myself from crying out because of the pain as I looked ahead. I can’t stop, I thought, not now. If I stopped even a moment, that armored carriage would surely leave me in the dust. I knew that despite all the blood rushing to my head, and so I forced my staggering feet to chase after it, glaring up the man on the carriage’s roof as I did; that imposing figure of his with his sword pointed to the heavens looked just like an adherent of the Lightning God.

“Something... like this... Something like this!”

I don't care if he's a messenger of the gods, a hero blessed by the Third Daughter Who Rules Over Fate, if he stands in my way, I will crush him! If he thinks this little lightning can stop me, he is wrong! And he will pay for that blunder!

My legs brimmed with ether as I moved along the ground, carrying with them the strength to crack a fissure across the very land I ran upon; the Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake has made the ether that much easier to control.

I set my sights upon the armored carriage. 10 steps... That's enough. I'll kill Reshia's abductor too. Watch me!

“GURUuu OAOA OoOoo!”



“Heh, what a tough cookie. I guess that's par for the course for a monster though.”

Gulland's senses tingled as he watched the monster approach. They screamed of the threat this monster posed, and he would be a fool to believe otherwise. After all, this very sense that was screaming at him now was something all first-class adventurers had; a sort of sixth-sense they relied upon to ensure their survival. Those who did not have it would not live long. In a sense, it was a skill that could only be learned by risking one's life.

That sixth-sense was screaming at him right now of how dangerous this monster was.

It was not such that he could absolutely not win against it, but he would certainly not be getting off scot-free if he fought it. That great sword over its shoulder was clad in the black flames of the Goddess of Vengeance, who rules the underworld.” The resulting power when combined with that colossal body could only be imagined. Close combat was definitely out of the question.

Muscles developed far beyond any human's, arms a size bigger than his, and judging from how it was catching up to the carriage, a speed more than enough

to excel in battle.

But if that's the case, then... he would just simply not engage the monster in close combat.

To begin with, adventurers hunted monsters as a party. Of course, there were eccentrics who hunted alone, but the natural strength advantage of monsters made fighting as a group much more preferable. The strategy was often the same: they would attack as a group to slowly whittle down the monster while conserving their strength.

It was because of that that Gulland had none of the purity of a knight. Instead, what he had was the ability to make the most out of every situation.

Astaroth

“Ruler of Wind and Lightning!!!”

One of the unique skills the Great Sword of Blue Thunder possessed, Astaroth, shot out toward the enemy.

That flash of lightning split into three streaks. before turning into a whip of lightning that lashed at the approaching monster. Any human would turn into cinders before that attack that covered the whole road, yet the monster slipped past it.

“Kuhahaha! Not bad!!”

It was a reckless move, but the monster managed to make it happen, yet Gulland only laughed as a predatory smile appeared upon his lips.

Barbatos

“How about this then! Ravaging Storm!”

Gulland swept with his sword and a blade of wind shot out from the whirling air. It was the same skill that took out Hal's subordinates.

Enchant

“Turn me into a blade!”

Like the very magmas that burned at the bottom of the abyss, the monster's voice resounded, chanting. At the end of which, the black flames clad upon its great sword doubled. And when it swung down that black-burning sword, it cut the blade of wind into two.

“Great! This'll make killing you all the more worth it!”

A voice howled within Gulland. Kill the monster! It said. Gulland did not try to oppose that voice; when he opened his eyes, the lips of his mouth split far apart to form a huge grin..

“I’ll kill you, Monster! I’ll fucking kill you!!”

Gulland laughed as he raised up his sword around which the storms gathered, invoking Frenzied Sword, the same skill that buried Gi Zo. The ancient grade sword in which was sealed a spirit sucked up the mana he fed it. Beads of sweat gathered at his brows as the wind howled.

Gulland swayed atop the carriage as it ran at full speed. Keeping his sword raised up with one hand, he held onto the roof with his other hand to keep himself from falling.

Zu

All

Do

Ishtal

Zein

Badion

“Devour, o God of Lightning. Like the rage that rules my soul!”

Gulland spoke in the language of the spirits, and lightning began to crackle with the great sword that had converged with the storm.

“Die, Monster!”

The maddened lightning whirled into a whirlpool as it shot forth toward the monster, but as soon as it did, Gulland clicked his tongue.

“I’ll be taking this, Mr. Storm Knight!”

Long hair that fluttered in the wind, a light armor so dyed in blood that it had turned dark-red, and a pair of eyes upon which reflected ecstasy. The timing of the holy knight, Gene Marlon, also known as the lightning-fast knight was just too good, prompting the Storm Knight to click his tongue.

The attack Gulland sent just now was canceled out by the monster, but it couldn’t get off scot-free. A huge wound opened over its shoulders from which blood spurted out. Any human would have died from such wounds, but the monster showed no signs of stopping.

“Tch, just when it was getting interesting!” Gulland spat.

“GURUuuoooOOOAaa!”

Blood spurted out from the monster’s wounds as it howled in its anger, but

despite that, it kept up the chase.

Gene followed behind it, obviously with the intention to attack from behind.

“What a horrible guy... Even though he’s supposed to be a knight.” Gulland spat as he watched the two.

It wasn’t long until the exit. Soon they would reach the point where Gowen’s regular army was waiting.



Lili turned to Reshia when she heard the howls bellowing from outside the carriage.

It was a familiar howl, a howl under which she once suffered defeat, and as a result, grew. Yet it was also the voice of the king who looked after Reshia.

“Holy Knight, Gene Marlon!? Why is he here!?” Mill said from the driver’s seat.

It was due to her saying that out loud that Lili could tell another powerful foe had joined the fray against the goblin king.

Goblin

The king that ruled over the Demon Children of Chaos had returned from his trip, and made it on time. In fact, he was right at the carriage’s heel.

When she thought that, Lili looked at Reshia. But Reshia only curled up after hearing the king’s voice, blocking her ears as she did.

“Lady Reshia?”

It’s true that they weren’t always friendly, but after the time they’ve spent, even Lili could tell that something like a bond had formed between them, so seeing Reshia act like this puzzled her.

Reshia was a lot closer to the goblins than her. Was she mistaken? But then Reshia suddenly spoke.

“...Ms. Lili, what should I do?” Reshia asked.

The frail voice that left her lips truly suited the frightened young girl she was. Without her mask as a saint, without her duty as a priestess, she truly was but a girl afraid of her own destiny.

Stupid, Lili cursed herself at the back of her head as she hugged Reshia.

“...The king will die if he keeps following us, but... I...” Reshia said.

“It’ll be fine, I’m sure. That goblin won’t have a problem with your common soldier.” Lili herself didn’t know for sure, but she couldn’t just leave Reshia alone.

Zenobia

Reshia shook her head. “Goddess of Healing” told me... The king can’t win against two holy knights.”

The power to know the future through one’s patron goddess. Normally, that was something to envy, but now it had turned into a curse that binded Reshia.

“...If you give the order, I will fight too. I won’t mind even if I make an enemy out of the entire country. I won’t regret it,” Lili said with resolve.

Reshia looked up at Lili, clearly taken aback. As far as Lili was concerned, it was an order that would end the moment the king died. And besides, she didn’t mind using her life for Reshia. Seeing how sad Reshia was, even Gastra’s ears drooped as he licked her hand to console her.

But in an ironic twist, Lili’s words were what prompted Reshia to make her move.

Though shaking, Reshia wiped her tears and asked Lili to open the window.

“I’m sorry... I made a mess,” Reshia said.

“It’s fine,” Lili faintly smiled.

After finally regaining her usual calm, Reshia spoke. “I’m going to say my goodbyes to the king.”



Relying only on instinct, I fended off that lump of bloodlust coming from behind. Three hits landed on my sword when I swung it to my back, but they were shallow and easy to deal with. That’s probably because the bastard coming from behind is messing around.

“Ha ha ha, you’re really amusing! I think I’ll catch you and sell you to a freak show! I’ll be sure to make a killing!”

Despite all that bloodlust, he doesn't seem particularly interested in killing me now. That's probably because he wants to make me suffer. What an audacious guy.

But thanks to him following the carriage has gotten that much more difficult.

It took all I had to stifle the impatience welling up from within to measure the distance until the carriage.

Can I make it...!? With this guy behind me and that guy in front—

Astaroth

“Ruler of Wind and Lightning!!!”

Lightning flashed again, this time splitting into two streaks that turned into a whip of lightning as it lashed toward me.

As I dodged that attack, the bloodlust from behind grew stronger, prompting me to leap forward. The rapier from behind glittered as it aimed for my feet. I'm in the middle of the air, but I think I'll have to gamble. That bastard licking his lips right now has probably guessed where my feet will land, so—

Accel

“My life is like a cloud of dust!!”

I invoked Accel, blowing up the ether behind me to push me onward into a wall of air. When I was about to land, I quickly put all my focus into gathering ether into my legs, and after mitigating the impact at landing, I ran again.

Damn it!

This acrobatics-like exchange is making it hard to concentrate. The carriage is getting farther and farther, while that rapier-using bastard coming from behind is getting nearer.

“Look out! Your back is open!”

The rapier grazed my side when it thrust out, cutting open a wound. The pain coupled with the piling irritation made me want to turn around and just tear that guy to shreds that very instant, but if I were to do that, I would never reach Reshia.

We've gotten quite far. It's probably not that much longer until we reach the human territory.

I have to go now.

Bracing myself for the worst, I took back my great sword after swinging it behind. Immediately, I felt the bloodlust coming from behind grow stronger.

“Well, I can’t have you ignoring me, now can we?” The rapier-using bastard from behind said.

“Beat it!” I spat.

Barbatos

“Ravaging Storm!” The man in front chanted.

The attack coming from up ahead tore the air as it cut a straight line. At the same time, I filled my legs with ether and jumped, then in midair, I invoked several instances of Accel, gaining me some distance before landing as I ignored my creaking muscles, begging for oxygen. Then that rapier came again from behind.

I was waiting for you!!

I struck my great sword against the ground, giving rise to a cloud of dust and causing the rapier-user to falter for a moment, giving me the opening I’ve been looking for.

—Go! Just 5 more steps!

“Tch, careless! Frenzied Sword!”

I pushed onward as I fended off against the storm of blades, ignoring the attacks that would land only on my arms or legs, as they could not threaten my life. Creaks sounded from my sword when I shoddily received the enemy’s sword.

—Hold on a bit more, Iron Second!

It was then that the window of the carriage opened. It was barred with iron, but on the other side was none other than Reshia. Then I felt a pain from my back. Damn it! He’s here already!?

“King!” Reshia cried.

“Reshia!” I called out to her.

When our gazes met, I saw the trace of crying upon her eyes.

Another blow landed on my back.

“Run, King! I’m just going back to the place I came from! So...!”

You’re telling me that’s your decision, Reshia? You’re telling me to run?

“Come, Reshia!”

I stretched out my hand.

“Don’t be afraid! If you can’t stand up against the gods on your own, I will stand with you!”

“King...”

“Take my hand, Reshia!”

Then I felt a blow land on my legs.

“Ku!?” I groaned out in pain.

“King!?” Reshia cried out.

“What a troubling little princess. I think she deserves some punishment, don’t you?” The rapier-using man said.

“Lady Reshia!” Lili cried out.

A light blow landed on my back when the rapier-using man suddenly overtook me.

What is he—!?

The man swung his sword toward Reshia’s outstretched hand, but before it could hit her, Lili managed to pull back Reshia. If it weren’t for her, that rapier would have surely cut off Reshia’s hand.

I looked to the ground, and for a moment I saw my unmoving legs.

It finally dawned on me that I was tumbling on the ground, and I cried out from the bottom of my lungs.

“RESHlaaa!!”

My hand couldn’t reach her. There was nothing more I could do as I watched the carriage leave. Soon it will reach the end of the forest, where I see a great crowd of cavalry waiting.

As I kept tumbling onto the ground, I eventually slid across it. When I finally stopped, I spat out dirt from my mouth, and the first thing I saw was none other than the rapier-using man who got in my way.

He was smiling.

—Unforgivable.

Every word that came out of his lips only served to rouse my ire.

“And so, the princess was safely rescued, and she lived happily ever after...”

—They must pay.

“As for you, whose role is over... It’s time to die! The Lightning-Fast Knight shall give you a prompt trip to the afterlife, Monster!”

—Those goddamned humans...! Along with all those fucking gods...!

From within me, in the deepest most part of my chest, a great heat began to stir, reaching out to circulate beneath my skin. The heat was so great it felt like there was fire underneath my skin.

“Well, it’s goodbye!”

The rapier-using man thrust his sword to my chest, but there was no more pain to be felt. My body was already—

“GURUuRUUGAAaa aA Aaa AaAA!!”

Chapter 86: Turnabout

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	3
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Swordsmanship A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv1); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King Bui (Lv40)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

“GURUuRUUGAAaa aA Aaa AaAA!!”

The Soul of the Berserk King awoke, filling my soul with a great wrath that resonated with the Blessings of the One-Eyed Snake and the Twin-Headed One. Verid throbbed on my right arm, and the jewel affixed into my left hand dazzled a black light as a black flame within it was lit.

—Kill the enemy before you! Kill! Kill! Kill! Kill! Kill! Kill! Cut him, tear him apart, crush him to pieces, rip him to shreds, ground him to dust, grind him between your teeth, pierce him, severe him, slay him! Kill the enemy! Destroy the adversary!

I couldn’t stop the hate from filling me.

Defiant Soul forcefully pulled out the power of the gods, but with that stolen power came the hate of the adherents.

—Kill! Kill! Kill! Fight! Fight!! Fight!!! Kill them all! All the humans Ativ created! Kill them all! Slay them! Slaughter them! Wipe them out from this world! —

Make them pay! Make THEM PAY!!!

The skills activated themselves without any regard for my will.

It felt like the Hell of Avidya when the abyss greeted me.

When a blow landed on me, lifting me from the ground, a blade entered me.

Ahh, yes, an enemy that I'm allowed to kill is here. No, this enemy here is a detestable foe that MUST be KILLED!

The corners of my lips raised. My teeth chattered as I grit them against each other and the winds of the underworld buzzed in my ears.

—There is an enemy before me. An enemy... that I can kill... An enemy that... I can... KILL!

“OOoooOOOOOaaAaAAa!!”

Joy filled me from the bottom of my heart.



Gene Marlon retrieved his rapier after piercing the monster. It was quite tough, but in the end he was able to slay it after piercing its heart.

He'd chased it from behind, piercing it ceaselessly to whittle down its strength until its whole body was covered with the traces of his beloved Ffire. Any normal goblin would have long died after 7 hits, but this monster just kept on calling the saint's name.

Its cries were exactly like those of a man whose beloved was taken away. They were wonderful cries. Indeed, there was nothing more pleasing in this world than to take the life of something with awareness.

Such creatures would scream as much pain as they were given, making the moment their lives were reaped just that much more satisfying. Gene was elated.

But that was that. Now that the monster was dead, all that was left was the sweet aftertaste of the hunt. It was time to go home. As for the rest, that Iron-Armed Knight would surely take care of it.

“Hmm... Oh, right, I should cut off its neck as proof.”

The monster before him was a goblin king, whose stamina and strength reached far beyond any goblin lord's. It was a rare and powerful specimen, and bringing back its head would surely net him a medal from the king.

"Being a holy knight is my sacred duty after all," Gene chuckled as he brandished his rapier.

But that laughing face of his very soon changed into one of shock, for that sword that he swung down toward the monster's neck was suddenly stopped by the monster's left hand in which was embedded a jewel. Even though he'd aimed it properly.

"...Huh?"

He too was a holy knight, however, and he was taken aback only for a moment before quickly jumping back, and then trying to retrieve his sword, but for some reason, it would not budge.

"Don't tell me!?"

There was a gaping hole over the monster's back that revealed the guts within, while the holes on its legs showed the white of its bones. Every one of those wounds were fatal.

When the thought of the monster being alive flashed through his head for a moment, Gene froze. That was the mistake of the Lightning-Fast Knight.

His rapier was stuck in the monster's hand, immovable as if it were held by a vise. He tried and tried to pull it out, and when he thought he finally could, he ended up jumping back, but it was then that the monster's right arm, clad in flames of black, suddenly lashed out only to graze his chest.

"Whew... That would've been really bad if I hadn't let go... !?"

He thought he was safe, but all of the sudden, a deep wound tore open on his chest, allowing blood to spurt out. Gene was shocked, but the emotions that came after was anger.

"Y-Y-You little!"

To think a lowly monster, a weak little monster, would actually injure the strong Gene Marlo. It was scandalous, it was sacrilege. And he felt his pride

shatter because of it. Contrast to him, the monster opened its two red eyes to gaze at him for a moment before bellowing out a howl.

“OOoooOOOOOaaAaAAa!!”

The figure of that monster slowly getting up was truly like that of an enraged beast. There was no awareness in its two crimson eyes as it threw away the rapier in its hand, and ran bare-handed at Gene to strangle him to death.

“You dare, lowly beast!?”

Gene fainted before jumping to dodge the monster, then as he broke through the trees and slipped his arms through, he recovered his beloved Ffire.

When the howls of the monster reached him from behind, he reflexively turned around to thrust out his rapier against the monster. Ffire was not like Gulland’s Blue Thunder that had special skills, but it was a remarkably fast sword. Yes, just like lightning.

When Gene thrust out his rapier, he thrust it out three times. Twice on the chest, once for the left and another for the right, and then a third for the solar plexus. Every attack was as accurate as a surgeon’s scalpel, yet at the same time, as fast as lightning. Gene’s swordplay was truly like a swallow in flight as he attacked relentlessly, not even giving the monster a time to attack. And when his rapier flashed for the enemy’s neck, it was aimed straight for the carotid artery.

Gene’s fame for being able to take out his enemies in an instant was what earned him the name, Lightning-Fast Knight. Humans, demi-humans, monsters all alike quickly turned into corpses before his terrifying rapier.

But, this time around... He picked the wrong opponent.

“Why won’t you die!?”

Gene thrust and thrust, but regardless how many times he thrust and hit, the wounds of the monster kept healing. The will of the god’s adherents and their power transformed into a torrent that billowed up from the monster’s wounds. The wounds left as they came, black flames taking their place, not even the splatters of blood remained. Gene felt like what he was cutting wasn’t a monster but a giant flame, causing even him to falter.

Each time the giant goblin stepped forward, Gene would take a step back. He no longer had that visage of a warrior addicted to killing that he had a while ago. The blessing of the Goddess of Wisdom had returned to his eyes as they darted to and fro, looking for an opening.

Then all of the sudden, the goblin that had been slowly walking all this time suddenly fell to its knees.

—A chance!

Gene bolted for the monster as fast as he could.



I found myself washing along that torrent of will and power.

But...

—Don't get cocky!

After being consumed by the influx of will, I allowed myself to fall on my knees. I don't have the time to be idling about here.

There is still... a chance to save Reshia. I have to push on. I can't be wasting away like this... against an opponent like this... in a place like this...!

As I invoked Defiant Soul, the flow of will entering me grew stronger, but I held on against it. That will was like a mass of hate as it bore its fangs into me and corroded my will, but I did not falter, and I bit it back!

—I will eat you!

I'll devour everything! Even the very will of the gods' adherents!

Your hate, your envy, your resentment, your wrath, your fears, your grudges... I will consume everything!

I will devour everything to push onwards. If I do that, my hand will surely reach Reshia. So don't you ever think the likes of you can corrode MY will!

I took back the reins of reason, and with the opening of my eyes, I cut open the darkness.

“OooOAaOO!!”

I moved my right hand to meet the approaching rapier. It was easy to guess where it was headed, and so I stopped it right before it hit my neck with the palm of my sword.

The rapier sunk into my hand, yet even as it did, I let it go deeper... deeper... even deeper, and then—

“Caught you,” I said as I grabbed the hand of the rapier-using man that was holding the rapier’s hilt.

Blood spurted out of my hand as I grabbed his arm with enough strength to crush it. He screamed. Unfortunately, there would be no forgiving.

I lifted him up just like that as I slammed his body into a tree... then to the ground, and then the tree, the ground, the tree... Any other human would have died after being handled like that, but this one was still alive.

In fact, he continued to glare at me with hostility even as I held his life in the palm of my hands. So, it seems this one really was an elite after all. In that case, just killing him would be a waste.

The man could no longer move when I lifted him up, and he dangled down like a puppet when I did. And then placing my other palm onto his body to hold him still... I tore off his arm.

The man screamed like never before. He cried with agony like one whose very soul had been plucked out. But it was exactly because of that that this whole thing was meaningful. A pain so great it made one yearn for death, yet the rapier-using man yet lived. Good, it’s just as I expected.

The power within his body regenerated his body just enough to let him survive.

It remains to be seen whether he actually could survive with just that.

“Human,” I said, “I want you to carry a message to the humans waiting outside the forest.”

I’ll have this one play as a messenger. He will be the one to bring my declaration of war.

“Tell them that if they’re thinking of hunting us, we will respond in kind.”

I stepped on the fallen rapier-using man. The man cried out in pain, but I ignored him.

“And if they ever lay on hand on Reshia Fel Zeal, I will make the suffer a pain worse than death.”

After saying my piece, I lifted the man with his good arm.

“Remember? Good. Now, go!”

And then I threw him.

“Remember, human! Remember well! You took what is precious to me! So I too will take what is precious to you!”

Pushing aside the trees, I threw the rapier-using man’s slender body through the forest, then I turned on my heels.

War is coming.

It is now only a matter of time.

“GUuRUUuuuAaa!”

To the heavens, to the land, to all those that lived, I howled.



Gi Ga Rax was at his wits’ end. He had gone here with the other wounded goblins just to keep the humans from getting in the king’s way, but now his body was bloodied, his breath was ragged, and even his steed, Hakuou, had lost its luster.

The only reason he and his men have survived until now was because of the king’s continuing howls that gave them strength.

The fact that the king was fighting near them gave hope to Gi Ga and the rest of the goblins, but only five of his men now remained. And of those five, wounds literally covered every inch of their body; it was such that finding an inch not wounded was harder than pointing out where their wounds were.

Bloodied and exhausted, Gi Ga kept his subordinates within the range of his spear bolstered by his long arm, while they would finish off the humans that faltered before his spear with their clubs and poorly-made wooden spears. It

was in this way that they managed to survive until now.

But even that tactic was reaching its end. Gi Ga's iron spear made a gaudy sound as the spear finally crumpled. It too has reached its limit.

When the humans were about to finish off Gi Ga Rax's weakened horde, several shadows suddenly came riding out of the forest.

In the blink of an eye, those shadows pushed away the humans and surrounded Gi Ga's horde. One of those goblins rode up to Gi Ga.

"Sorry for making you wait, Friend." A familiar voice said.

"Lord Alashd!?" Gi Ga Rax said, taken aback.

The goblin who had left to call for reinforcements from the king had returned with an army to save a friend.

As Alashd eyed the bloodied and exhausted horde, he turned to the rest of the Paradua goblins. "Rejoice, my brothers! For it is on this blessed day that we, goblins of Paradua, can prove our valor! Behold! These warriors of the king are standing before you, bloodied and breathless, yet their resolve stands unbowed. What about us? Will we falter in fear! I think not! Therefore, let us show all goblins and humans alike the pride and valor of Paradua!"

Alashd raised his spear, and the surrounding goblins and rider-beast howled out in response.

The goblins of Paradua fought the humans without the slightest hints of exhaustion.



Gi Gu Verbena, who was waiting for the tribes, suddenly received an urgent report: Gi Go has been defeated.

And it seems the enemy who has defeated him was headed here now.

What should he do? Should he break up the encirclement to conserve his forces? Or meet the enemy head-on?

A difficult problem troubled Gi Gu.

"So this is human... They're strong," a voice said from above Gi Gu. That was

none other than the very reinforcements Gi Gu had been waiting for.

“Lord Rashka,” Gi Gu said.

Even among the numbers of the well-statured Gaidga was an even bigger goblin who stood behind Gi Gu.

“It is well and good to hope to preserve our numbers, but fear too much, and cowardice will take root.”

“What do you...”

“Warriors of Gaidga! To battle!!”

As Rashka said those words, he casually twisted off one of the trees to use as a weapon, and he slammed it to the ground. As he cried out a great battle cry, he ran to battle without any regard for the goblins from Gi Village that surrounded the enemy.

The rest of the Gaidga goblins followed Rashka’s mad charge from behind, howling as they did.

The Herculean Wyatt blocked the way up ahead. He held a shield as he valiantly faced the mad charge of the Gaidga chieftain.

Rashka did not give any words of encouragement like the Paradua goblins would. And when he saw the enemy taking a stand against them, he gave only two words: Slaughter them.

“—This is a chance,” Gi Gu muttered as a flash of inspiration suddenly struck him.

“Follow the Gaidga! Don’t fall behind! Follow Lord Rashka’s lead!”

The front was the hardest to break. But that was an opportunity in and of itself, for Wyatt would have his hands full just stopping Rashka.

This was a chance, indeed, a chance to wipe the humans all out!

“Gi Zu, Gi Do, follow them! Kill the enemies of our brethren!!”

As Gi Gu himself joined the fray, he cut down the humans that stood in his way.



Hal and his twenty iron-legs along with the ancient beast tamer, Gi Gi, have been fighting hard since the start of the battle. They've been running to the forest to rest up before coming back to strike the humans again in a sort of hit-and-run strategy to slowly whittle down the enemy, but in the end, even their able numbers were decreasing. Even with 20 of Paradua's elite, the humans' great numbers still proved a formidable foe.

After the umpteenth charge, when they went back to the forest, a goblin from Ganra came with a message.

—The tribes have arrived.

As soon as they heard that news, it was as if all of their exhaustion had left them and they howled out in jubilation.

Along with that message also came some new orders. The entire front line had switched to an all-out offense against the humans, so Hal and his subordinates were to attack separately from near the village with the goal of stopping the humans.

“...Who gave these orders?”

“It was...”

Meanwhile..

The Holy Knight, Gowen, was currently moving through the forest; his brows were knitted due to all the news he's been hearing from various sources.

“...The goblins have actually started to truly act as one. Has a commander appeared?”

Goblins riding on beasts fought in the parts nearest to the humans' territory.

The large number of soldiers in the village preparing to retreat were being kept from moving.

And in the battle deepest in the forest were the slow, but strong goblins fighting.

It was a perfect roster.

But if there really was a commander who was pulling the strings, then

someone would surely come for him.

As soon as he thought that, a goblin dressed in robes stood before him.

“There’s no business for your like up ahead,” the goblin smiled sarcastically.

It had a wand in hand and looked closer to a human than a goblin.

“Name yourself!?” One of Gowen’s escort said.

“To the king, I am Gi Za, Chief of the Druids, but to you, good sirs... I am—”

Lightly tapping his staff onto the ground, a whirlpool of blades shot out toward everyone.

“Gya!?” The escorts cried.

In the blink of an eye, several of Gowen’s escorts had fallen.

“—A God of Death.”



Level has risen.

Protagonist

3 => 20

Gi Ga Rax

89 => 99



Author’s Note: Gene was crushed, and now the goblins are on the offense. By the way, dear readers, I just wanted to let you know that I really like battles. I like siege battles. I like battles where one side annihilates the other. I like battles where both sides are fighting. I like battles where one is pursuing and the other is running. I like defensive battles. I like battles.

TI Note: Master of rituals -> Chief of the Druids.

Intermission: Return of the Mighty Orc King

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	20
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Swordsmanship A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv1); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv40)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

A great howl resounded throughout the forest.

That was none other than the voice of that terrifying goblin.

“Doralia... I have to go.”

The leader of the orcs, Bui, headed west to the lake as soon as he realized that the humans would attack. He hated himself for being weak, but preserving the horde took priority.

The humans attacked at the worst possible time. They attacked right when the females were starting to give birth and when they were working on the canals.

They came with soldiers and adventurers, causing many orcs to suffer under their tyranny, but in the end, their casualties were still less than the goblins. The goblins would grow weaker if he just left them alone, but he couldn’t.

That scary goblin was calling.

Kill! He cried. Exact judgment upon the plunderers!

That scary goblin was calling out to all the monsters of the forest.

You don't have to force yourself, you're under my protection. The monster tree that had lived for countless centuries said, but Bui shook his head.

"If I don't go, that goblin will probably burn you to the ground..."

Was the pressure from that goblin this bad when he met him? Bui didn't know, but what he did know was that he could feel the goblin's great anger despite the distance between them. A wrath so great it seemed to want to consume everything.

Thank you, Bui. You're so kind. Let me give you a gift before you go.

From one of the monster tree's verdant branches fell a red fruit into Bui's hand. Doralia's affections could clearly be felt when he took that fruit.

If you eat this fruit, you will become what you wish to become. But you have to be careful because it will only last for one day.

A shiny, red fruit.

"Thank you."

Bui took his spear and ran. Surrounded by battle-loving orcs, he looked pensively up ahead. Right now they had to obey the goblins. That unfortunate truth would probably make Master Gol Gol sigh if he knew of it.

Bui intended to expand the horde and create a new force of mighty orcs. A plan like that that would carry on to the next era was something that had no need for wars. Or at the very least, not now.

The orcs cared little for trifling matters like reconnaissance. To them power was everything, and battles were a simple matter of crushing everything before you.

"Found them!" Hushing his voice, Bui ordered his fellow orcs to hide themselves. The humans were dressed in armors of iron and wielded iron swords and spears. They hid behind their carriages, ready to strike the instant an enemy neared.

—This is too scary! Scary! Scary! Scary!

“It’s scary, Doralia!” Bui said quietly so that no one could hear, then he looked to the red fruit in his hand. “...The thing I wish to become.”

Bracing himself for the worst, Bui devoured the red fruit in one go. The blooming taste in his mouth left him speechless as the juice of the fruit slid down his throat to dye his guts in its sweet. Then a great heat enveloped him.

*Ba bum! His heart throbbed. Then his hand shook as it held his spear. No, it was not just his hand but his whole body, bringing him down to his knees to earn the contempt of the orcs.

“Are you scared, Bui!” They mocked. “The orcs don’t need a cowardly king!”

But when one of the orcs laid his hand on Bui’s shoulder to turn him around, what they saw shocked them.

“SHUT UP!” Bui spat with an ire unheard of from the ever frail orc whose eyes always looked down. His lips even stretched so far apart they seemed they would tear as they let out a burning breath that blew onto the orcs.

Each time Bui grit his teeth, his body grew a size bigger. By the end of it, his muscles had swelled, and his body was over twice the size of that small Bui. The other orcs looked up at him.

His gaze was sharp, so sharp it was like a piercing blade, and it sent a jolt running up the orcs’ spine.

And along with the changes of his body was the one thing his predecessor, Gol Gol, had that he didn’t: A brute’s courage.

The new Bui charmed the orcs with his great strength and brutish disposition. Bui himself knew it was reckless, but the madness came with the power.

The forbidden fruit Doralia gave him had instilled that power into him.

Bui grabbed a nearby tree, and then scraped off its thick trunk with his grip.

The mighty king of the orcs had returned, and so, the orcs became one.

“The orc kneels to none!” Bui proclaimed.

That savage figure was just like the late Gol Gol, and it filled the orcs with

happiness upon seeing it.

Bui's words spread among the orcs, and all the more so when it turned into a great roar.

"GURUuuOOOOoooOOoAaa!!!"

The orcs cried out in turn.

"FighHHttt!"

Like that Bui led the orcs to crush the humans.



The craftiness of the goblin before him made Gowen want to curse. It skillfully handled that wand in its hand without giving him any opportunity to attack. Countless blades of wind have been shooting at them since awhile ago, and each time they managed to slip through it to near that crafty goblin, an arrow would come shooting at them from somewhere.

"A trap?" Gowen muttered to himself, unbelieving. Who could have thought goblins could actually use traps? Apparently, the birth of an intelligent king had turned the goblins into a truly terrifying force.

It almost felt like he was fighting against humans, not monsters. Gowen struck down the approaching arrow as he took a step closer to the crafty goblin. But he just couldn't reach him. It was like trying to approach a withdrawing wave and no matter what he did, the goblin never allowed him to close their distance.

He couldn't order his men to attack the archers hiding in the forest either, as they would easily die under the wind blades of this crafty goblin. Gowen might be able to deal with the magic himself, but asking the same from his subordinate was too much.

For the first time in a long while, Gowen truly had his hands tied behind his back.

The goblin before him grinned. "Farewell, human. A fair warning: don't enter the forest again, or else..."

He considered chasing after the goblin for a moment, but when he saw the

humans running from the now opened path up ahead, he almost cursed.

“We lost,” he said.

The old veteran was no foreigner to defeat, but this defeat was one of the most bitter ones he’s suffered yet. Because the reason they lost was because he underestimated the enemy.

Because of that that he decided to cut their losses as much as he could and retreat.

“Save the retreating soldiers. I will handle the enemy.” Gowen ordered before going out to meet the retreating soldiers.

“Lord! The orcs are attacking with the goblins!” One of the soldiers said.

Gowen was not surprised to hear that, not even in the slightest. The moment the goblin king appeared, he knew that this entire forest had become their enemy.

“Consider the whole forest hostile. I will protect the back. Go help the weak. We’re retreating!”

Gowen wanted to fly into a rage, but he kept his cool. He’d been looking for an opportunity to expand his territory ever since being given a fief right next to the Forest of Darkness. He would cut down the trees, reduce the number of monsters, all to expand his territory even if it meant going against the commands of the king. That was the plan, and yet now...

When an orc attacked him, he quickly disposed of it by cutting off its head.

“They’re... maddened.”

Gowen’s gaze was sharp like a blade as he kicked away the orc that kept glaring at him despite having its neck cut. Gowen kept himself calm despite his anger as he disposed of the approaching monsters.

After the orcs came, odd goblins started appearing, and then that came.

“The Herculean Wyatt, I presume?”

One of the people retreating was a giant human who lured the enemy to him even as he retreated. Gowen rushed up to him and swept away the goblins.

“The holy knight... My apologies, we lost.”

“I don’t mind. Leave this here to me. I thank you for protecting my men, now go!”

After seeing the wounded giant of a man off, Gowen turned his gaze to another giant. But this time it was a goblin.

“A strange monster,” Gowen said.

“A strange human,” the goblin said provokingly.

Slash

Suddenly, it attacked. “My fury howls!”

Gowen hadn’t even taken his stance when that dazzling black light of an attack came at him, yet he was still able to sweep it aside.

“Not bad,” the goblin said.

“Monsters can never hope to overcome humanity,” Gowen said.

Enchant

“Let’s try it then... I pursue power!”

A black light covered the goblin’s club as Gowen brandished his sword.



I can hear master’s voice.

What a sad, heartrending, and yet angry voice it was.

In fact, it almost sounded like a scream.

The humans are scary, but if master is fighting, I have to go. Actually, the only reason I’m here is because master left. I’m gonna complain when I see him.

And then I’ll play on top of that human female’s lap.

I wonder if I’ll see the two gray ones too.

Somehow it all seems so nostalgic, even though they’re not that far. I did end up running to the south though because of all the stinky iron the humans wore.

But if it means being with master again, I don’t mind working hard once in a while.

Yep, let’s do it.

“UuooOOn!”

I called my friends.

“What is it, Hasu?”

“Boss, I’m hungry.”

My friends lied down when I called them.

“We’re going to save master!”

“Orc meat!”

Yes, delicious meat! Does human meat taste good too? But they’re so thin, I don’t think they’d taste very well.

Anyway, let’s go! I happily wagged my beloved tail.

Let’s chase out the humans!



After having his arm torn and being beaten all over and suffering a pain so great it wouldn’t have been strange to die from shock, Gene walked through the forest.

He had to drag along his leg because that monster broke it too.

“Huff... Huff... How dare... that lowly... goblin...”

Not only was he wounded all over, he even lost his beloved Ffire. If he were to encounter a monster now, it wouldn’t matter that he was a holy knight, even he would have no choice but to roll over and die.

But despite being in such a state, the fire of vengeance burned brightly in his eyes as he walked. His slaves were waiting for him up ahead. He would be safe as long as he can get to them. After that he can go back to the capital or Gowen’s group and recover his health. And once he’s back up on his feet, he would go back and kill that monster to wipe out this shame. Otherwise, he wouldn’t be able to live with himself.

“Gu...” Gene grunted as a fallen tree root took his attention, then he walked again, irritated.

After a while, he finally saw his three slaves.

The two battle slaves were frightened when they saw him.

“Is that how a slave should behave after finally seeing their master, huh,” Gene said smiling even as the pain distorted his face, but the elven slave did not react. In fact, she even growled a bit at him.

“...I don’t like your attitude.”

Nothing was going his way. And now even this elf was pissing him off. Irritated, Gene kicked the elven slave, Selena.

The elf rolled on the ground as he kicked her, but she didn’t scream. Only, in the next moment—

“GUuUuRURU, GAaAaAa!!”

Her eyes went white and foam bubbled out of her mouth.

“Wha—” Gene was just about to ask what when Selena extended her hand, and a plant sprang up from the ground and twined around him. With the Collar of Obedience on her neck, Selena shouldn’t have been able to do such a thing.

The collar not only weakened its bearer but also allowed the owner to inflict unimaginable pain onto the bearer. But Selena had already lost her consciousness after being forcefully fed the blood of demihumans. Right now, that blood was going out of control.

Any other day Gene would have been able to easily brush aside Selena’s attack, but with his body weakened, he was powerless to stop it. Moreover, with the plant constricting him, he couldn’t even utter a word to give an order to the two battles slaves.

As the plant constricted him, its tendrils entered into his mouth to reach into his stomach.

“*Cough, Gu, Ack!?”

When he felt something foreign enter him, his mind started to race as he panicked.

“UuuGAAa!!”

Selena's rampaging power caused the forest to squirm and the vines to grow explosively. As the tree branches grew with a roaring sound, they stretched out for Gene's neck and strangled him.

"Go, Ga, *Cough!?"

When his neck broke, he dangled their from the constraints of the plants and the trees like a puppet whose strings had been cut.

After seeing all this unfold, the younger of the battle slaves siblings, Yoshu, whispered to his older sister, "Let's run."

Selena wasn't conscious right now, so if they weren't careful, they might just find themselves in a similar position as their late master.

"I'm not running. If you want to go, go," Shumea said as she watched over Selena. There was a hint of desperation over her face. "It was only for a short while, but that girl is a friend. I don't want to abandon a friend."

"But!"

"Besides, this place here is crawling with monsters. Exactly where are you planning to run?"

"That's..."

Shumea wryly smiled when she saw her younger brother speechless.

"Seriously, we sure were brought to one annoying place!" Shumea spat as she touched the collar on her neck.

"Then what are we going to do?" Yoshu asked.

"It's simple. We'll just have to wake her up."

"That's crazy!"

"Maybe, but isn't that fine? It would be nice to do a good deed once in a while... Especially, now that I'm free."

After Selena killed Gene, they had been freed from their identity as slaves. For someone like her who has been a slave ever since, this was none other than the freedom she'd always admired.

It was only right to pay back the favor to the one who gave her this long

sought freedom. Shumea believed that, though her younger brother, Yoshu, found it hard to agree. In fact, he'd always found it odd how his older sister was always so upright when slaves were usually more hateful.

"Step back, Sis. I'll start," Yoshu said.

"You know you don't really have to come. You can just—"

"It's coming!"

His sister tried to convince him otherwise, but he ignored her and equipped his helmet.

Chapter 87: In the Arms of the Night God

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	20
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Swordsmanship A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv1); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv40)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

I turned around after crushing the rapier-using man.

The human territory. It’s just right there beyond the break of the forest. Focusing my heightened vision, I could see the carriage Reshia was riding. They seem to have stopped temporarily as the cavalry joined them.

I could just go there and kill everyone.

The hate seething from within me implored me to go, but...

—No.

My subordinates are still fighting in the forest. I need to help them first.

As for my feelings regarding Reshia, I should put them away for now.

Picking up my broken great sword, I headed to where Gi Ga and the others were.



As dusk was approaching the human side huddled together in a room in the village to convene a war council.

Gowen had managed to endure Rashka's attacks by himself, but while he did not incur any injuries, he was left severely fatigued. The man wasn't young anymore. Rest would be needed to recuperate.

"Aging is such an unpleasant thing."

But it wasn't possible to rest and hold a war council at the same time.

"Yuan, you lead the main force. Take them along the road to run to the fief. Corseo is leading the cavalry. So long as you make it out of the forest, he will take care of the rest."

"Understood."

Corseo is an old soldier Gowen knew since back when he received his fief for the first time. He has taken command under Gowen over 10 times already in their long history together. As far as Gowen was concerned, Corseo was his most reliable subordinate.

Even the young Yuan found himself comforted the moment he heard Corseo's name. Since a man like that was waiting for them, his only duty then would be to ensure that his men safely exit the forest.

Gowen turned to the adventurers. The person representing them was none other than the Herculean Wyatt.

"I would like you to come with us as protection for the wounded. Of course, I will properly compensate you," Gowen said.

"...Alright. We're going back anyway, so we might as well," Wyatt replied.

Wyatt frowned for a moment when he heard the way Gowen phrased his request. "Protection for the wounded." Gowen seemed to know adventurers well.

Adventurers were different from your run-of-the-mill gang; they had pride. So when someone requests them to protect the wounded, it becomes very difficult for them to reject. And it was precisely because Gowen knew that that he worded his request as such.

“Yuan, have the soldiers rest in turns. We’re leaving first thing in the morning tomorrow.”

“Do not let your guard down. The night is the hour of the monsters.”

“As you command.”

The hour of the Night God, Ya Jansu, is at hand.

If they can survive it, they might just make it out of this alive.

Yet even the twin moons seemed to mock them, as the two moons hid themselves from sight.



Stifling my breath, I prowled through the darkness. When I neared the village, I stifled even the slightest breath I had left. I don’t know if these humans are planning to attack or retreat, but it doesn’t matter.

Whatever course of action they wish to take won’t affect my decision to slaughter them. There was no light from the moons tonight, as the two moons have hidden themselves, but the terrifying expression on my face was clearly smiling.

The actors of this raid tonight aren’t from the Gi Village, but from the four tribes. I am moving by myself with a horde centered around the forest hunters, the goblins of Ganra, along with Alashd of Paradua and Gi Zu. There’s also another horde centered around Rashka of Gaidga, but their roles will come only after the success of this attack.

After confirming from far away that there was fire lit in the village, I ordered the Ganra soldiers to position themselves around the village, south the upwind.

“Everyone is in position,” Gilmi said.

After gathering all the platoons that would be engaging in close combat in one place, we started.

“Fire!” Gilmi ordered, and the archers of Ganra all shot their bows simultaneously, while I led the charge across the fence of the village.

On the other side of the fence, I took a good look at the village.

We need to pay attention to the defensive measures placed around the village.

The fences at the western part of the village are in good health. They've been further reinforced after the orc battle. There are less fences in the southern and eastern parts of the village. And in the northern part, the fences there are still damaged from the orc war.

I did think of speeding up the repairs, but because of all the damage it received along with the impending trip to the Fortress of the Abyss, it never did get fully repaired. In fact, it's been mostly left untouched.

That leaves the pitfalls.

Again, the western parts has the most pitfalls, while the pitfalls in the northern parts are mostly useless. There are almost no pitfalls left in the southern and eastern parts of the village.

With the defenses out of the way, all that's left is the enemy themselves.

There are 300 enemy soldiers in the village itself, while the enemy cavalry is situated at the end of the forest to the east. It's nighttime, however, so the enemy can't make a move.

This makes the northern part a good place to attack. There are barely any obstacles there, so the only trouble we'll have is with the humans themselves.

As for the east it's a poor choice because of the cavalry waiting at the back.

Hmm... Looks like it's settled then.



The scout leader, Yuan, was a young soldier trained by Gowen himself. He was born a commoner, but with hard work, he managed to hone his skills to a shocking degree. In fact, he was actually the second strongest soldier in this expedition.

The village defense was weakest to the north. It was so weak it was basically asking the enemy to attack there, what with only a strip of broken fences and a handful of pitfalls left. It was almost as if a war had occurred here in the past, and the only defenses they were seeing now are the remnants of that war.

The defense was weakest to the north, then it was only natural that the most number of soldiers be placed there.

—The enemy monsters are intelligent.

Just as Gowen had advised him, Yuan did not see the monsters as your typical bunch. Instead, he treated this battle as if he were fighting against a sly human general.

The largely undefended north, the fortified west, the weakly defended south, and the closest to the human territory, the east.

The enemy would surely attack in the night. The soldiers were thoroughly briefed on that. And more than likely, the enemy would come from the south.

This village used to be their home. There's no way they wouldn't know of its weaknesses. Which is why Yuan decided to light the most watch fires in the south along with a respectable number of spearmen, especially the elite. And with large shields lined up on the ground, there was more than enough defense should the enemy choose to attack there.

As for the West, there was plenty of defense left, so Yuan decided to leave the adventurers and the injured there.

In the end, this whole battle was a question of probability. A guessing game, so to speak, of where the enemy would most likely attack.

Yuan might have 300 soldiers under his command, but with the soldiers sleeping in turn, he could allocate only 150 of that 300. Moreover, there were four directions that needed to be defended. If he were to evenly spread that, he'd end up allocating 40 soldiers on the front and the back, making it likely that the enemy just might manage to make it to the headquarters, where Gowen was resting.

Yuan was someone whose status did not permit him to reach the position he had today. The debt he owed to Gowen was past that of mere gratitude or respect, so he wanted to overcome this ordeal tonight and pay back the favor he regularly receives from Gowen.

“Enemy attack in the south!”

“They’ve come! Don’t panic! Focus on defending!”

Yuan headed south as soon as he heard that the enemy was attacking there to take command.

The soldiers to the west were mostly injured and couldn’t be moved. The north couldn’t be left unmanned lest they make it too easy to attack, so...

“Wake up the soldiers! Have the soldiers stationed in the east to move to the south! We’ll bring the battle to them!”

They had the advantage yet.

They could still wipe out the goblins.



The watch fires are moving.

Looks like Gilmi did their job well.

I watched as the soldiers moved south to defend, then I called out to my subordinates behind me.

“We’re going! Eliminate the enemy!”

I had left my broken great sword to the old goblin. What I’m using now is the same long sword the humans used. It’s in good condition, but the lack of weight makes it hard to get used to. I really need a great sword.

“GURUuuuOAAA!”

I cried out with my World Devouring Howl, causing the humans to cower, while the goblins’ morale shot up. But that’s not all, this howl is also a sign, a sign for Gaidga’s Rashka to make his move.

The south looked easy to attack, so we intentionally used it to divert their attention.

The north is undefended by default, so the enemy would obviously focus their soldiers there, leaving only the east and the south.

We could just go ahead and attack the south, but we’d end up with too many casualties. More importantly, this attack is a surprise attack. What we needed to hurt wasn’t the body but the mind.

We should keep our losses to a minimum, while maximizing the damage dealt.

If we attack from the east, there's a chance the cavalry might take us from behind, but it won't be a problem if we leave before they arrive.

And so, just like that, we attacked from the east.



When Yuan arrived at the southern part of the village, the goblins' arrows shooting from the forest were easily blocked by the spearmen's shields.

"They're not coming out to fight at all," a commanding officer said.

Yuan heaved a sigh of relief when he heard that. Even better if they don't come, he thought.

"Don't let your guard down!" Yuan said as if to rebuke the cowardice welling up from within him. Then he strained his eyes as he looked up ahead the forest.

It was then that a soldier suddenly screamed.

"The enemy is attacking from the east!"

"What!?"

Yuan's eyes opened wide with shock. At the same time, he grit his teeth.

"Damn, we've been had! Third Platoon, return to your post to the east!" Yuan ordered to the reinforcements that were originally stationed in the east.

"It's fine! We can still recover!" Yuan said to encourage his faltering men as he looked into the dark of the forest once more, but then another report came in: The enemy is attacking from the west!

"That's not good... There are only injured soldiers stationed in the west... Is this a diversion?" Yuan began to suspect, but the arrows from the forest never stopped.

"Have the soldiers who just woke up head west!"

When Yuan realized he'd fallen behind, a sense of shame pervaded him. A monster had actually gotten one over him. Then fire appeared from the east.

“That’s really bad. They brought fire too! Someone send an escort for Master Go—”

“GURUuUuUoOOaAAaA!”

Just when Yuan was about to give order, a howl suddenly resounded, causing his body to stiffen. That voice belonged to none other than that goblin king that attacked before.

That thing had to be stopped. Fear tainted Yuan’s thoughts, and he rashly ordered.

“Second Platoon, Fifth Platoon! Subjugate the enemy king. Go! Sixth Platoon protect this place with your life!”

Unsheathing his own sword, Yuan led the soldiers.

“What!?”

But then a raging mad beast appeared in sight.

Chapter 88: Night Attack

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	20
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Swordsmanship A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv1); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv40)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

The flickering watch fires revealed the monster’s great stature. It was much bigger than the other goblins, almost two heads bigger, in fact.

It held a long sword in its hand. It was the same long sword the soldiers used, but the way the monster used it made it appear smaller and weightless. The black flames of the underworld covered the long sword. They burned darker than the surrounding darkness, almost as if they were calling the living to death.

When the monster looked around, it looked like a death god who had come from the abyss in search for a trophy to bring home.

—What is that thing doing?

Yuan blankly looked the monster in the eye, and he immediately regretted it.

The monster’s gaze brimmed with hate for humans — for himself, and that ferocity of it made him freeze.

“A-A-A—”

He had to give orders, but flustered, the only thing he could utter out was a list of incomprehensible sounds. He did not even realize the puddle of water that had gathered beneath him by his quivering legs. The blood-red eyes of the goblin king had left him completely frozen.

As a roaring sound bellowed, death came swinging.

The heads of the soldiers nearby came flying with their helmets still attached. One of those heads rolled over to Yuan and wordlessly stared at him.

What are you getting all scared for? Weren't you going to save us? We died because of you.

"A, ahh, AHH—"

Fight, coward! Fight that thing and die! Die! Die! Die!!

The envious voice of the dead toward the living echoed clearly in his ears.

—I'm going to be killed. I'm going to die.

Yuan shook his head at the approaching goblin king, but that thing was the embodiment of death. It would not stop just because of that. 'Death' approached him. Step by step, it neared him, but Yuan had already forgotten about the sword in his hand, only continuing to shake his head as he watched 'death' approach.

"GURUuuuAAaaAA!!"

'Death' howled.

It was as if it were saying it would send everyone to hell. It howled, angrily, as it cut down the soldiers one after another, even crushing a soldier's head with its helmet still attached with its other arm. It was then that Yuan was reminded of a story he'd heard of before. A legend regarding the very shadow he was seeing before him. Beings born of the abyss, they were called: devil.

—A monster, a real monster has crawled out of the abyss. Humans can't win. Not against that.

'Death' threw a soldier's crushed head to the side. And before Yuan knew it, 'death' was right before him. Black flames flickered around the sword of 'Death' as it raised up, but Yuan only watched—

“Yuan, fall back!!”

It was a first hearing that heroic voice so angry, and immediately, Yuan woke up from his stupor, allowing him to jump back.



Using one of the effects of the One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye, I could see the status of those whose classes were lower than mine. I analyzed all the humans I came across, causing my head to ache with all the information rushing, but I grit my teeth and endured it.

It would be best if I can get the head of the commander.

“King!”

Behind me were two rare goblins. I ordered them to break the enemy formation.

“Go! Alashd, Gi Zu! Don’t look to your left or your right, just run straight for the west!”

I saw them off as they ran west. I’ve sent the main force. If they go around to the back, we’ll be able to cut the enemy apart at the same time.

The main purpose of the attack is to instill fear into the enemy. To that end, even burning the village is worth it. So I had the Princess of Ganra, Narsa, use the Byunei Bow to shoot a flame arrow and set my house, the king’s house, on fire.

To scare the enemy further, I also decided to put on a little act as a devil from the abyss, making full use of my naturally intimidating appearance.

Now, where’s that commander?

I gaudily killed the humans I came across. Sometimes I would crush their heads, and sometimes I would bash them. I killed everyone I came across even as I kept my calm. But it’s different compared to when I fought Gol Gol and the ogre lord. A different pressure was weighing on me from within as my soul screamed.

“GURUuuuOOAOAAa!”

Fear me, humans! I wallowed in hate for those who've killed my brethren to suppress my screaming soul. If I let them go, they'll only kill more.

—Is this really the right thing to do?

It was only for a moment, but that hesitation caused a spear to graze my cheeks.

—No, don't hesitate. It's too late for that. Are you trying to make the humans laugh? I am me. I will rule this world as the king of monsters. And then I will save that woman, Reshia! This time I'll protect our promise!

For a moment, the memories from the other side that I'd long forgotten stirred, and the image of someone sadly smiling at me overlapped with Reshia's.

I grabbed the spear that grazed me, and then kicked away the terrified soldier.

—Yes, fear me! Fear me, humans! You have touched that which should not have been touched!

I threw the spear I'd just picked up, letting it fly into a soldier to skewer it dead.

—Where is the commander!?

I looked around the battlefield.

—Wrong.

I cut down another soldier, and then another.

—Tch, wrong again!

With my strengthened muscles, my enchanted sword, and the skill, Swordsmanship A-, compensating for my sword skills, I easily cut down enemy after enemy, letting dark-red blood to gush and dye the field.

—Found him!!

When my eyes fell on a person standing some distance away, the title 'Sub Leader' flashed through my mind. Immediately, I ran to that man, cutting down all the soldiers in the way.

“GURUuuuOOAaaAa!”

I raised up my sword. If I can just get this human’s head, we’ll have accomplished enough. Fear would dominate the enemy, and pursuing them would become that much more easier.

But just when I was about to cut down the enemy commander, another soldier jumped out of nowhere, angrily yelling.

I tried to read his status but failed.

—The same class!

I swung down my sword against the soldier’s.

So this is the real commander!



“This is good.” The giant goblin, Rashka, smiled.

“Damn, it’s that goblin from this morning!” Wyatt cursed.

Rashka attacked the west with his horde, and the person to greet him was none other than the Herculean Wyatt whom he’d fought this morning. The main powers of their horde aside from him were Gi Gu Verbena, who excelled in leadership, and Gi Gi, the ancient beast warrior. Gi Gu was always leading from the back, so it was only natural that he was uninjured, but Gi Gi being uninjured was mostly by luck.

“Wasn’t the defense in the west the strongest!?” Vitz said as he quickly stopped tending to the wounded and wielded his sword.

“I will take the lead,” Gi Gu said as he passed Rashka, who was fighting Wyatt, and attacked Vitz. Gi Gu laughed at the strength of the opposition. “It’s our home, so of course we would know all the ins and outs. Even the very location of the traps themselves and the holes in the fences.”

“Damn it! Are these guys really goblins!?” Vitz cursed.

Gradually, Vitz began to fall back to Gi Gu’s relentless charge. If Yugil hadn’t jumped in to help him, he would have surely died.

“Be careful, Yugil! This goblin is strong!” Vitz warned as Yugil tacitly walked up

after nodding.

The two adventurers worked hand-in-hand against Gi Gu. Yugil would block Gi Gu’s attacks with his shield and attempt to break Gi Gu’s posture with a parry, after which, Vitz would attack.

When Gi Gu saw how well they worked together, he laughed. “Are you actually challenging me to a battle of teamwork!”

As Gi Gu fought against Vitz and Yugil, and Rashka against Wyatt, Gi Gi rode his triple head, ignoring the wounded humans around, as he entered into the village.

Following him were the beast tamers under the late Gi De. Gi Gi had heard from them how Gi De died.

—Vengeance must be had.

Gi Gi and the goblins he led had that one thought running through their minds. Beast tamers such as them greatly loved their beasts and their comrades. Goblins reproduced quickly and were usually numerous, so such a quality among goblins was particularly striking.

They trampled over the humans that approached them as they went deeper into the human territory, when a man wielding a flaming sword came to view.

“Boss, that’s the one!” One of the survivor beast tamers pointed to the man who was none other than Bellan, the Wand of Destruction.

As Gi Gi eyed him, he lightly kicked the belly of his triple head. In no time at all, the distance between them was shortened. As Gi Gi took out his axe, he clashed against Bellan’s wand.

“So it was you! Die!”

Fire

Sword

“From fire shall be born a blade!”

The red gem on Bellan’s wand dazzled brilliantly as flames shot up from it.

The battle in the west raged even more.



The enemy sword repelled my sword. The enemy handled his sword well,

making it difficult to exhibit the actual power of enchant. It was hard to land a clean hit, as the enemy kept managing to parry my attacks.

For a moment, the enemy turned to look at the surroundings.

The panic from the surprise attack is almost about to wear off. They'll probably regroup after this. It have been nice to kill the enemy commander before leaving, but that doesn't seem likely. Especially, since he seems to specialize in defense.

It's a pity, but it seems we'll have to retreat.

I slashed up with my sword, and the enemy dodged by slipping through below it. Immediately after, I slashed down, and the enemy backed off even more to dodge.

After seeing that a considerable distance had been made between us, I called forth my ether.

Accel

“My life is like a cloud of dust!”

I moved so quickly the very air broke, but the enemy dodged again.

I didn't turn around to clash with enemy commander a second time.

We still have time. There's no reason to hurry. The real thing starts once dawn breaks. We've already accomplished our main goal, so it's fine to retreat now even without the commander's head.

I cut down all the humans in my path as I opened a path to the west.

This sword is really too light. I can wield it just fine, but it's really lacking that weight needed to cut the enemy apart.

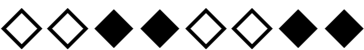
As I thought that, I bellowed out the howl that signaled our retreat.

Now then, humans.

What will you do?

Will you be too scared to move? Or will you retreat anyway?

Either way, only hell is waiting for you.



Level has risen.

20 => 21

Chapter 89: The Night is Long

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	21
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Swordsmanship A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv1); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv40)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

From time to time, the beasts would howl, and the soldiers would jump awake. The atmosphere was so tense, the humans could not peacefully sleep. In time, however, the light of the morn reached them, even as the arms of the night god held them tight.

Dark shadows weighed heavily under the soldiers’ eyes. Every one of them was alert, not even a mice could get past them unnoticed. They knew that fiendish monsters lurked just outside the village.

Those same monsters had attacked last night. Fortunately, they were able to fend them off, but their viciousness was such that they reminded them of the devils of the underworld. All the soldiers that came with Gowen thought so.

The soldiers that could fight now only numbered 250.

If the injured were to be included, that number would increase, but it was still a worrisome figure.

“If we withdraw now, the losses will increase...” Gowen pondered to himself.

Before the break of dawn, in that moment when the dark of the night grew even blacker, Gowen turned to the Forest of Darkness. The soldiers were cowering and horrified, all because of that goblin king's attack.

Gowen didn't know this, but of the forces that were battling against them, the orcs numbered 40, the goblins 50, and the kobolds 20.

"But..."

Despite the various platoons suffering so much, they couldn't be given the opportunity to rest. The option of "waiting" to allow morale to recover was simply not feasible. The longer they waited, the greater their losses would be. And even if they attacked, the forest was not something they could develop. The soldiers were too fearful of the few powerful among the goblins' ranks.

"It seems... there's no choice but to forcefully withdraw."

There weren't many choices from the start, but now they have no choice but to retreat. They would have to run at full speed to the cavalry waiting outside the forest.

"To that end..."

If they do choose to run, the goblins would surely give chase. If so, then they might as well take the initiative. The one leading the chase... that would be none other than the goblin king himself. If they could bring the fight back to them to slow down their momentum, they would be able to quickly withdraw.

Gowen grit his teeth and hardened his resolve.

As the reign of the night god finally came to an end, the bright light of the sun returned to the forest. Soldiers all around heaved sighs of relief, and Gowen left to decide the formations. It wasn't until when the sun was at its highest that Gowen finished. Yuan would lead the retreat, while Gowen would watch the back.

Healthy soldiers were positioned in front to clear the way of monsters, while the wounded were placed behind them. Protecting the rearmost were Gowen and a group of soldiers he had specifically picked out.

After forcing down their meals, they hastily departed. On either side of the

road were soldiers wielding long swords who served both as scouts and escorts for the wounded. In the middle were soldiers with spears, ready to strike at a moment's notice.

By foot with the wounded, it would take a day or two until their destination. It would also depend on how fierce the goblins attack, but regardless, because of the road, they had no excuses not to bring the wounded.

The roads were still defenseless, however, and they had no intention of spending the night on it. Thus, they would walk be it night or day until they reach their destination.

"Kobolds behind us!" A soldier yelled, almost screaming.

Gowen looked up. A pack of kobolds led by a bigger kobold than the others watched them from behind. They didn't seem to have any intentions of attacking, but neither did they seem to have any intentions of leaving.

"...Ignore it. Proceed," Gowen said.

At the same time, he thought of how detestable of a move this was. Enough to almost make him start wondering whether a crafty human was actually pulling the strings behind these monsters.

Kobolds weren't a problem. They could easily deal with them anytime, but the problem was that the goblin king was probably the one who sent them. If they careless chased the kobolds, they might just run and lead them deep into the forest, allowing the main force burdened with the wounded to be attacked.

But they didn't need to chase the kobolds for them to have an effect either. Just their very presence was enough to pressure them. It was a simple pressure, but given time, even the simplest of pressures could pile up to become something heavy. And once the sun sets, that pressure would slowly sap their strength.

Gowen knew all these things, but he had no cards left to respond with. In fact, beads of sweat even started to appear on that ever expressionless face of his. Still, he kept his mind calm.

If he were to break now, the soldiers would fall into chaos. In that case, the soldiers might just scatter and run, making them easy pickings for the monsters

to take.

—Total Annihilation.

It could happen.

The enemy was that strong of an adversary.

“Platoon leaders don’t let your guards down! I am watching the back. Those of you on the flanks, keep sharp!”

He didn’t know how much of an effect that would have, but he truly had no other cards left to play.

All that was left now was to trust in his strength and proceed.



When the humans departed, I ordered Hasu of the kobolds to watch them. I won’t let them rest even for a moment. The humans shouldn’t be able to stand against this pressure forever. They’ll eventually break. And when they do, our attack will have that much more of an effect.

“Don’t make a sound. We’ll be in trouble if they see us.”

We were also desperate. There might not have been much casualties on our side last night, but the continuous battles have been extremely taxing. Especially, since we had to travel a long way away from the fortress to get here. Not to mention the goblins of the Gi Village.

Many of the goblins are heaving and puffing just following the humans. Even the legs they use regularly to traverse the forest freely are heavy now. And even though the injured are at the back, the archers of Ganra all had to work to treat them.

Princess Narsa had to stay behind with the rear group to lead them, leaving only a handful of archers with Ra Gilmi as our archery.

The rare and noble class goblins are still healthy, but everyone else is suffering.

Looks like I’ll have to step up.

“King, when will we attack? The fatigue is piling up... Wouldn’t it be better to

attack now?" Gi Za asked as he stood beside me.

I shook my head. "Not yet. We have to tire out the humans first. It will take a little longer before the hunt begins."

Gi Za must've thought I was being too cautious, as in a rare show of disagreement, he said, "If we don't hurry, they'll make it to the entrance of the forest."

That's true. Which is why, we'll have to carefully choose the timing.

"I know," I said.

"...If you're worried about incurring losses, just use the orcs," Gi Za said in a hushed voice.

I shook my head again. I won't be using just our strength, I'll also use the others. It seems Gi Za has picked up the ability to read my thoughts to some extent ever since evolving into a shaman.

"I still have plenty of uses for the orc. There's no reason to throw them away here."

Looks like there's still a considerable difference even in war between how much the goblins trust their fellow goblins and how much they trust the orcs.

"We'll be pursuing them for time then?"

"Yes."

Gi Za nodded and then returned to his subordinates to encourage them. Do you think you'll be able to avenge Gi Zo like that? I heard him say.

Right...

I have to teach them...

That conquerors have no need for compassion and indecision, only destruction.



As the march went on, morning turned to noon, and then noon to dusk. The soldiers carried the wounded along the road, wordlessly resting for an hour from time to time. Everyone quietly walked.

They were tired, so tired that even with the kobolds following them, most of the soldiers seemed about to fall asleep. The only reason the army had yet to collapse was because of their faith in Gowen's strength. As long as Gowen was here, they would surely be able to come home. Those were the thoughts of the soldiers. Which is why they were able to save their comrades despite the harshness of this whole trip.

Somehow, they could still act with humanity.

"We're moving!" A platoon leader said.

At his words, the soldiers stood up.

Everyone looked ready to be crushed from the fatigue and anxiety, yet they managed to keep their minds cool and gather together as an army.

"Just a little bit more! Four more hours and the entrance will come to view!" A platoon leader said.

The soldiers raised their heads. It was already past midnight, and after a few hours, the light of the sun would return. The monsters haven't attacked either. Perhaps they've already given up and won't be chasing anymore. Such thoughts gradually took root within the soldiers' hearts.

Because of that they failed to realize the kobolds slowly closing in. Not even Gowen himself noticed. As far as he was concerned, the kobolds were just there to pressure them. The ones they should really pay attention to were the goblin king's goblins, and then the orcs.

By the time he realized what was going on, it was too late. The kobolds had vanished in the darkness and was now biting at their heels.

"Ku..."

"Uoon!"

"Gyaa!?"

As the soldiers were pulled down, their screams resounded under the embrace of the night god.

"GURUuuuAaAAa!!"

At the same time, a howl bellowed. And in an instant, the figure of the devil illuminated by the light of fire flashed through everyone's mind.

"O-O-ORCS BEHIND US!" A soldier screamed.

Gowen knit his brows.

They've been had. That was the goblin king's howl, but he was nowhere to be found.

Where is he going to come from!? He's clever, so he will surely aim for their weak point. And as far as weak points went...

—The flanks are going to be crushed!

" platoons, protect the injured and proceed!! Don't let the monsters approach!" Gowen said in an almost angry voice as he brandished his long sword and positioned himself at the rear to defend against the orcs.

The various platoon leaders all yelled at Gowen's orders to calm down the panicking soldiers. "Draw your weapons! Don't falter!"

They kept a watchful eye out for their flanks even as they marched forward. All the feelings of wanting to run were suppressed by courage.

"Kill them!!"

But the force that hit the flanks was overwhelming. The noble class, Gi Gu Verbena, the ferocious Rashka of Gaidga, and the adherent of the mad god, Gi Zu.

In no time at all, a hole was chewed out of the humans' defensive line. The injured picked up their weapons to fight, but the goblins easily wiped them out. They were only three goblins, but their fighting power was devastating.

Gi Gu worked exceedingly well with his subordinates to eliminate the humans. Rashka trampled on everyone with his overwhelming black power. And Gi Zu fought savagely with the Mad Dog skill he received from the Mad God. Under their fierce attack, the defensive lines of the humans was quickly broken.

"Damn it, at this rate!"

When the platoon leaders realized that the defensive lines wouldn't recover, they decided to prioritize those who haven't been hurt. At the very least, the injured should escape.

As the platoon leaders came to that decision, they implored the soldiers to walk ahead. It started to look like they would have to split off from the rear, but if they didn't hurry and quell the confusion, they would suffer even more losses. The platoon leaders clenched their fist at the callousness of their decision, and went to fight the goblins themselves at the rear.

It was a praiseworthy decision, but the soldiers that ran off were greeted only by an even worse hell.

“Onwards!!”

“They came again!!”

Attacking the soldiers that left the rear were Alashd of Paradua and his rider-beast cavalry, Gi Gi and the beast tamers, and Gi Za and the druids.

“Vengeance for our brethren!” Gi Gi yelled as he broke through the defensive line with his triple head. The person he and his subordinates were looking for was none other than Bellan. As they cut down the humans, their eyes darted to and fro, looking for a man wielding a sword of flame.

“Put to rest Gi Zo's regrets here!” Gi Za ordered his subordinate druids before looking around him. “And so, the board is set.”

In the battlefield, in the center of the onslaught of flying heads and gushing blood, where the blood dyed the land red, Gi Za laughed. All that was left was for the king to add the finishing touches.

The stimulation from the battle rising up from his chest caused Gi Za to smile.

The night was yet to end.

Chapter 90: Bellan, The Wand of Destruction

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	21
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Swordsmanship A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv1); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv40)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

The sounds of iron clashing resounded throughout the forest.

“Avenge Gi De!”

Though clad in flames, a staff was a staff, and the ancient beast warrior, Gi Gi, found his hands numbed after a failed attempt to cut it down.

Sparks flashed as Gi Gi’s axe clashed into Bellan’s iron wand. In their struggle, Bellan managed to flick back Gi Gi’s attack over his head.

“A worthy opponent. I thank god for this opportunity.” The Wand of Destruction, Bellan, smiled, elated at having found a worthy opponent.

“GUuRUuRUUGAAaa!” Gi Gi roared as he sent a flurry of attacks to Bellan.

The Wand of Destruction, Bellan, was a first rate adventurer, and he endured Gi Gi’s attacks. But the battle around them had started to avoid them. The druids Gi Za brought had completely changed the battlefield.

There weren't many among the humans who were trained to fight mages. Battling mages required extensive training or an ancient grade equipment or a blessing from a god. Such things were naturally beyond the reach of the common soldier.

All the more so when the soldiers Gowen led were mostly young soldiers in their latter 10s to 20s, picked up from farmer families. The power to battle against magic was something they wouldn't even dream of.

To make things worse, it was currently the time of the night god, the very time in which the druids could exhibit their greatest power. As Gi Za's blade of wind howled madly, killing everything in its path, Gi Do casted his own wind spell to block the humans' path.

As the druids exterminated the surrounding humans, the goblins who had charged ahead competed over which one was more daring.

"What's the matter? You're getting slower!" Yugal received a goblin's blade that came sweeping from the feet with his shield, but the great power sent his shield flying. The goblins led by Gi Gu Verbena were only normals, but they moved with perfect coordination, to the point that they were almost like Gi Gu's limbs. One dealt with Yugal's shield, while the other two attacked Vitz from both sides.

Vitz might have been an experienced adventurer, but even he couldn't just slip through a pincer attack. By the time Yugal recovered, he saw Vitz being hit with another blow.

Carelessly charging in could get one killed.

"Damn! Yugal, are you alive!?"

But at this rate, they'll just end up being killed by Gi Gu anyway.

"Ku..."

As Yugal picked himself back up, this time the goblins turned their attention to Vitz. They came at him with a pincer attack just like before, which he dodged, but waiting for him after he rolled was an axe to his neck. A metallic sound resounded, as Yugal's shield had made it in time. If not for that, Vitz would have surely died.

“From above,” Gi Gu said, prompting one of the goblins to leap.

Yugil’s eyes followed the goblin up as it rose, but Gi Gu’s axe was already headed for his legs. Vitz managed to cover him and block the axe with his sword, keeping him alive. Yet who knew for how long? With the battle this difficult, it was only a matter of time before they broke.

“Damnit, is god asleep? If I live through this, I swear I’m converting to an apostate sect,” Vitz cursed as he let Yugil watch his back.

^{God}
“O god, have mercy.” ^{Bless}

Were those words uttered by a god or a demon?

“Go,” the White Hand of Life pointed when she appeared as the soldiers following behind her gripped their spears tight and fought the goblins.

“Trifling soldiers!” As Gi Gu swung his arms, the three goblins under him made a blood bath of the soldiers. But as if without any regard for themselves, the soldiers threw themselves at the goblins despite their wounds. One of them even managed to strike out his spear at Gi Gu.

Although shocked, Gi Gu parried that spear before quickly lopping off the head of the soldier.

“...What did you do?” Gi Gu looked down on the now unmoving soldier, then turned his eyes to glare at the White Hand of Life.

“It seems they hated you so much they couldn’t stand living under the same sky as you... even if it meant dying themselves,” the White Hand of Life smiled just like a god or a demon.

“O-Oi!” Vitz called out upon seeing how odd the soldiers acted.

But the White Hand of Life just smiled at him as always. “We should retreat now. I believe this too is the will of god.”

“Just what did you...”

“The soldiers themselves wished for this: to become god’s vanguards.”

The soldiers were wounded and their legs were even broken, but they stood up easily as if all was right with the world. Then in the next instant, they let out

a bloodcurdling battle cry and ran toward the goblins. One of those soldiers was the same soldier Vitz had lent a shoulder to last night.

“Oi!” Vitz called out, but the soldier didn’t even turn to him as he threw himself at the goblins.

“What in the hell did you do!?” Vitz asked in a panicked voice.

To which the girl smiled despite the hellish background that was war. “It is simply the will of god. Don’t you think it’s exceeding beautiful when you think of it that way?”



Scout Leader Yuan was leading the way when he heard the goblin king’s voice, prompting him to up the pace.

“...Sir, the wounded won’t be able to follow like this,” one of his men said.

But he did not slow down even for a moment. In fact, he hurried even more. The truth was that he was simply following Gowen’s command to leave the forest, but the men didn’t see it that way. To them he was simply a coward.

“Scout Leader Yuan!” A soldier grabbed his shoulder, forcing Yuan to finally turn around. “Are you planning on abandoning our comrades!?”

“No! But at this rate...”

The two was just about to start arguing when a voice bellowed, silencing the two.

“This voice!” Yuan said.

“It’s near!” The soldier said.

“We’re going now! We need to get as far away as we can!” Yuan said.

The soldiers all moved at Yuan’s words. It didn’t matter whether they were wounded or not, the king’s voice was like a stimulant that forced them to drag their bodies.

“Just a little bit more and we’ll be able to contact the others outside. If we can just get to them, we’ll be able to fight back against the goblins!” Yuan said to encourage the soldiers.

But then the forest swayed, the dry leaves stirred, and all of the sudden, hope seemed to vanish, even as the morn was about to greet the dark, even as the end seemed closer than ever.

“GURUuuuAAa!!”

By the time Yuan turned when a howl and a scream resounded together, it was too late. Wielding black flames in his hand, the goblin king tore apart the soldiers.

“Tch... protect the wounded! Those who can fight, form a wall! It’s just one goblin! If we put everything on the line, we’ll be able to kill it!”

The goblin king danced at the center of the soldiers’ formation, wielding the flames of hell to easily and effortlessly tear through armors of iron, while he sent soldiers flying with his rock-hard fists.

Then he picked up one of the spearmen with one hand, and threw him at the line of spears the soldiers had formed. Yet despite that overwhelming physical prowess of his that could even easily pick a man up and throw him, what truly terrified the soldiers was his clever mind that prompted him to break their line in that exact moment.

“GURUuuuUAaaAAa!”

Each time the goblin king howled, the pressure bearing down grew stronger. The very air felt like lead, as moving one’s limbs became almost as difficult as in water. One of the soldiers tried to strike the king from behind, but the strong tail of the king whipped at him, effortlessly crushing his armor and knocking him out.

“Fix the formation! Those wounded... just make a run for it!” Yuan hastily said, thinking something needed to be done, but his orders only caused the group fighting in the frontline to crumble.

The soldiers managed to recover their formation, but the crowd of running soldiers blocked their way, causing them to effortlessly die under the goblin king’s hand.

Yuan was powerless as he watched all this take place.

“Shit! Shit! Shit!!” Yuan cursed as he grit his teeth and pulled out his sword.
“If it weren’t for you!”

As the goblin king cut down the two soldiers beside Yuan, he slipped underneath their corpses to reach the king’s chest. Turning his hips, he struck at the goblin king. His sword grazed the king’s side, wounding him, but in the next moment, the goblin king’s tail flicked, and Yuan found himself crashing into a tree.

“Scout Leader Yuan!”

That was the last thing Yuan heard.



“Ga Ga GAaRUGUaaGAAa!”

The spear swung, and with it came another head. The iron spear Gi Zu had taken as prize was so worn down it was painful to look at, but the Mad Dog skill drove Gi Zu to keep fighting despite that. He crushed, thrust, kicked all who stood in his way.

He fought with a fervor that suggested he wouldn’t hold back even against an ally, and he recklessly charged toward the humans just like a mad dog.

The sight of Gi Zu killing everything in his path, the wounded and the fighting soldiers alike, finally forced a platoon leader to personally block his way.

“Attack it from both sides! I’ll take it on from in front!”

It didn’t matter that he had to postpone giving orders to the rest of the army, what mattered now was dealing with Gi Zu.

Two healthy swordsmen took position at Gi Zu’s flanks.

Gi Zu went straight up ahead with his spear, ignoring the two, but his spear was struck down, and then sealed as the platoon leader stepped over it, then finally, the two soldiers by the flanks struck down their swords at Gi Zu.

“Nu!?”

But Gi Zu’s strength was multiplied several times by the skill, Mad Dog, allowing him to take back his distorted spear to strike at the approaching

soldiers. When he turned to the platoon leader—

“Don’t look down on us!” The platoon leader said as he swung widely to cut Gi Zu’s arm.

“GUuuuAaa!?”

Blood spurted, but the platoon leader did not stop. He cut again from the shoulder to the thigh, and another from the arm to the shin. But even as steam rose from Gi Zu’s body, he kept standing.

Gi Zu struck out his spear with fury, but that spear was easily parried with skill, allowing the platoon leader to take away his spear.

“Die!”

The platoon struck to cut Gi Zu from his shoulder down, when—

“GURURURUuuAaGAGAAa!”

“—!?”

Gi Zu jumped into the platoon leader, allowing his shoulder to take the blow to stop the attack.

“Impudent!”

He couldn’t cut down Gi Zu being this close. He needed to separate themselves first, but Gi Zu held on tightly to his armor. For a moment the vision of the platoon leader shook. By the time his vision was clear again, Gi Zu’s mouth was wide open, showing his sharp canine teeth.

The sound of armor being removed resounded as the breastplate distorted and Gi Zu’s fangs buried deeply into platoon leader’s neck, then using his hands, Gi Zu ripped off the platoon leader’s head.

The platoon leader couldn’t even scream before he died. As Gi Zu stepped over his corpse, he eyed a flame-wielding man.

“GURUuuGAGAGAAa!”

Hate filled Gi Zu as he attacked his next prey.



Fire burned his wounds. As the sound of flesh roasting sounded, the Wand of Destruction, Bellan's, iron wand fended off Gi Gi's axe.

But then one of the beasts of the beast tamers came for his legs.

"Hmph." Bellan's burning wand swung from the top of his head down to crush the brains of the beast, instantly killing it.

^{Toto}

"Go!" Gi Gi said as he rode his triple head, looking just like a knight that rode on a beast instead of a horse.

"Ridiculous! To think you would actually fight me mounted!" Bellan ran right into Gi Gi as he kept his body close to the ground. He was so close to it it looked like he would fall, but instead, he picked up a small stone to throw at Gi Gi.

"Ku!?"

Gi Gi faltered for just a moment, but that was enough for Bellan.

"Gue!"

Bellan looked like he would crash into the triple head when he suddenly dodged to the side and cut the triple head's legs. Gi Gi tried to swing his axe, but by that time, Bellan had long retreated behind him. The triple head tumbled onto the ground, and Bellan leisurely approached Gi Gi.

To Gi Gi's fortune, he managed to crawl out from under the Triple Head in time to receive Bellan's attack.

"...It was fun, but this is the end!"

Their weapons locked as their wand and axe clashed against each other, but then Bellan's flames suddenly started burning even fiercer. Those flames gradually reached Gi Gi to burn his skin.

"GUuRUGAGAAagaa!"

Gi Gi ferociously roared out, but just when it seemed all hope was lost, Gi Zu came jumping at Bellan's seemingly defenseless back. Bellan was a first-rate adventurer, however, so it was only a given that he would be capable of sensing that dense killing intent coming at him from behind.

Bellan smacked his lips as he turned, jumping back to make some distance

between him and the two goblins. Then as he fixed his grip on his wand, his hand touched it to make the fire smaller, gathering it solely around the red jewel at the tip of his wand.

“The second one is a mad dog... Damn, these guys really know how to keep you entertained.” An overly ferocious smile appeared on the former knight, Bellan’s, face.

The fearless Gi Zu ran toward him. At the same time, Gi Gi did so as well.

“GAGAGAAaAa!”

The strength behind that arm was far greater than any Gi Zu could normally muster, but Bellan leisurely saw through it all. As he tried to swing his wand, however, Gi Gi’s axe came.

“I’ll fight with you.” Gi Gi made use of Gi Zu’s wild attacks to lock Bellan down. Gi Gi always worked alongside beasts, so it was easy for him to match his movements with the wildly charging Gi Zu.

His axe locked with Bellan’s wand again, but the one with the advantage this time was him. If he could just keep Bellan locked down like this, Gi Zu would be able to finish Bellan off.

With a setup like this, even Bellan would have no choice but to fight defensively... or at least he should have had no other choice, but...

After Bellan distanced himself from them, he parried their blows as he kept stepping back. Gi Zu’s skill was actually poor at suppressing people. Yet even without knowing that, Bellan calmly rendered Gi Zu’s mad charge useless and fended off Gi Gi’s axe.

Toto

“Go! Gi Zu!” Gi Gi said.

“You call this teamwork!? Even kids are better off!” Bellan spat.

Bellan brushed aside Gi Zu’s wrathful charge, and then swung his wand at Gi Gi’s axe.

“What’s wrong, goblin!? Think you can avenge your friend like this!?” Bellan said as they found their weapons locked again.

“Don’t look down on me, human!”

Gi Gi forcefully pushed Bellan away, but Bellan struck out with his fist before they separated, causing Gi Gi’s axe to fall.

Yet despite that, the one who was shocked was actually Bellan.

Because the place he was pushed to was none other than the place where the triple head was. The three heads of the triple head bit at Bellan’s two legs, effectively sealing them.

“You planned this...”

Gi Gi’s order to ^{Toto} “Go!” was not actually directed to Gi Zu, but to the triple head.

As Gi Gi picked up his axe, he swung it sideways to Bellan to inflict a fatal wound, but Bellan used the recoil from that attack to break free of the triple head

“Spectacular, but...”

Even Bellan’s guts started to spill out as the blood from within violently flowed out. But despite that, he continued to hold onto his wand and stand fearlessly in the middle of the road.

“Go, young ones! Blood Oath of the Flying Swan’s Wand of Destruction, Bellan, shall hold this line!!”

That was directed to Gowen’s remaining young soldiers in the battlefield.

“The sin of trespassing into the forest lies with all! You think we’ll let them escape!?” Gi Gi said as he ordered his subordinates to send out the wild dogs.

When the wild dogs passed by Bellan, his wand swung, and their heads were crushed.

Though fatally wounded, the man’s valiant spirit burned valiantly as ever.

Chapter 91: Transformation

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	21
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Swordsmanship A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv1); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv40)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

In a certain room, where statues of demons lined up, was a beautiful woman peeking through a giant mirror.

“That child sure seems lively,” the beautiful woman said.

“Indeed,” the one-eyed red snake said.

He’d made his body smaller to make himself presentable before his master and was peeking through the mirror alongside her. Reflected on that mirror was the forest and the road where a vicious battle was taking place.

The mirror reflected the battlefield from above, making it easy to see the whole situation. The one road stretching through the forest was the life line of the humans. It connected to the world of the humans beyond the forest, where flatlands, forests, and farmlands were sparsely scattered. Then roughly 40 kilometers beyond that break was a human settlement, one of the countless ones near the forest.

“...Hmm.”

The forest was not always this small. But in time, the humans gradually cut down the forest and hunted the monsters to create more land suited for themselves. The scattered forests beyond the Forest of Darkness was proof of that.

Altesia unhappily snorted before turning back her gaze to the battlefield.

Dotted on the mirror were those who had received the divine protection of the gods. Blessings from the mad god, the sword god, a member of the fire god's household, the flame god, the wind god, and...

Rodo

"The Fire God, huh."

Haïen

Altesia looked down on the world through the eyes of the Corpse Bird.

The fire god who has given much to the humans. The god who created the sun, gave birth to the spirits, and taught the humans how to forge weapons and cook food. The accursed god who tore apart the god, Kutiarga, and the mother god, Deetna. The old god who gave birth to Ativ and Hera.

His head became Ativ, his left hand became Hera, and his two legs became the twin gods of the moons, Ervi and Navi.

Altesia muttered those things out with a pained look on her face despite the fact that god she was speaking of was her ancestor.

"I was never good at dealing with him."

He was one of the few people, the Goddess of Vengeance, ruler of the underworld, had difficulties with.

Knitting her pair of beautiful brows, she looked into the world where a vast amount of power drew from the gods.

The God of Wind, Castor, who created the demihumans with the God of Earth, Nmaro, was for some reason, particularly attached to a certain elven maiden.

A mischievous smile appeared on the underworld goddess' lips

Halfway through the road leading out the forest was a battle between the denizens of the forest and the humans. Those battling closer to the village tried

to run, and the goblins gave chase, turning their battle into a game of tag. But regardless, the battle had gone past the point where the humans could still hope to turn it around. In fact, the goblins blessed by the gods even fought in the parts of the forest near the break, where the cavalry was waiting.

The God of Wind, Castor, seemed to have started using his power. Then from among the humans waiting just outside the forest was a familiar resonation that made Altesia narrow her eyes. It was the power of the God of Healing, Zenobia.

“Even though I warned him, he still lost her... It seems he doesn’t have the power to fight the Goddess of Destiny, Liuryuna, yet. Poor child,” Altesia laughed when she thought of his despair.

Castor “Has the God of Wind talked to the Forest God? If the forest is changed this much without permission, it’ll turn into a fight.” Chenzhen

That would be fun too though, the goddess muttered as she turned her gaze to the floor. Her eyelashes were so long it almost seemed like they sounded when they closed. The pondering underworld goddess looked just like the Hera the Goddess of Wisdom.

“Verid, do you think Chenzhen is interested in the forest?” She asked the loyal snake.

“...But of course, unless the gods have forgotten it after 400 years,” Verid replied. He had that much confidence as one of those who antagonized the whole world 400 years ago. His black flames seethed when he recalled those times.

“Very well,” the Goddess of the Underworld seemed pleased at his answer.

She pointed to one of the hundreds of snakes prostrated by her feet. “Apostle Gawyn of that which is faster than the wind, spread your wings, and send word to Chenzhen. Bring fear and judgment to the children of the fire god!”

A gray snake wriggled as it coiled itself.

“I have received thy bidding,” the snake said before turning into a gust of wind.

The goddess turned her gaze back to the mirror.

“Consider this a gift, little boy. Now, kill the humans as much as you please.”



I cut down enemy after enemy with the long sword in my hands, and before I knew it, less than half of the human soldiers remained. I didn't even need to use the Soul of the Berserk King. This monstrous body was more than strong enough to deal with the average human soldier without any special skill.

I enchanted my long sword with black flames.

The commander was done in just a while ago, causing the humans' formation to collapse. Some of them ran to fight, while some of them ran to flee. Without any order, the humans were no threat at all. I could easily fight them one at a time like this.

The Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake gave me seemingly unlimited stamina and life. It didn't matter how many times my body was wounded. It didn't matter whether it was a great sword or a rapier that wounded me either. The power of that protection would heal me as soon as I was wounded. In fact, the power welling up now was greater than before. Just what is going on?

Is this the power of the gods?

—But with this I can do it. I can wipe out the humans!

The moment I turned my gaze up, the forest exploded.

To be more precise, a part of the forest grew with explosive vigor to block the road. Vines and treeroots gathered together and encroached onto the road.

The humans screamed in despair as they ran. Actually, I'm shocked too. And I'm sure everyone else is too after such a sudden change in the forest.

“Damn it! We can't even get near!”

“Sis, calm down!”

When two humans came tumbling out of the forest, seemingly unaware of what was going on, I sharpened my ears to listen to their conversation.

“Oh, hey! This is the army of the feudal lord. Good timing. Hey! Can you guys

help us out for a bit!”

When the female of the two humans said that, it was as if the human soldiers realized something, and when they turned around for just one moment, what they saw was...

“UuuU... u, Uuu!”

A body entangled in a great number of vines.

It seemed to be in pain as it held down its head, then it tried to approach the female of the two humans that came tumbling just now, and called out to her.

“Selena...?” The female human asked.

“UuUGAa!” But the response of that thing couldn’t really be called a response. Then as if responding to the pain of that thing, the trunk of a tree slammed itself into the ground just like a person would his own arm.

When the earth trembled upon impact, the humans finally awoke from their daze and they went off screaming.

Suddenly, I wasn’t sure what to do anymore.

Apparently, that thing wasn’t some secret weapon the humans were hiding.

Regardless, however, that didn’t change the fact that it was swinging those overgrown vines around like some whip against the humans in its way as it headed my direction.

I turned to it to cut it down.

As that monster and I approached each other, we cut down the humans in our way.

In between us were those two humans, who were most likely a pair of siblings.

“—Looks like it’s not their ally either.”

What a pain, seriously... Bringing something like this into my battle.

“Hey, how do you stop that thing?”

In a twisted sense of irony, the human forces were now truly in ruins. Their

commander was gone and an unknown monster has even made an appearance. All that's left is to catch them later, but that won't be a problem. All of the sudden, it feels as if all that anger that had condensed into a mist within my mind, clouding my judgment, has been blown away.

The older sister of the two kept looking at the monster as she spoke. "You're actually going to help us? Great! And here I thought the soldiers of the feudal lord were all pushovers."

"...Enough chatter. Tell me how to deal with this."

"Selena... If you can just clear a path for me to that girl suffering there, I'll take care of the rest."

"Got it."

Damn, this situation is getting weirder by the second.

"My name is Shumea. That one over there is my younger brother, Yoshu. We're both former battle slaves. Thank you for assisting us, Mr... oh..."

When she finally turned around, she froze.

An understandable reaction, but considering the pickle we're in right now, I'd rather she didn't react normally.

"My... what big muscles you have."

I take back that previous statement. It seems she has more guts than I give her credit for.

"Keep your word... Enchant!" Swinging my blade to shake off the blood, I invoked Enchant and clad my sword in flames.

"After me! Shumea!"

"Ahh! Darn it, I don't care what happens anymore! let's go! Yoshu, follow!"

"Huh? Wait! Sis! Waaaait!"

For the meantime, I decided to ignore the confused voices.

Footsteps followed from behind as I ran toward that woman named Selena. In response, as if to protect that woman, the vines, the branches, and the trunk of trees gathered together to form a blade, but I cut it down.

“Wow! Sweet moves!” Shumea said.

“You know that’s a goblin, right!?” Yoshu complained.

“Don’t be picky! That boss is going out of his way to save us. And besides, goblins aren’t that much different from demihumans!”

If you have the leisure to argue, how about lending a hand over here?

“Yoshu, shield! If he can get us to Selena, I’m going to try and bring her back! Make sure you protect me then!”

“Well, sure, but how are you going to wake her!?”

“When a woman has guts, there’s nothing she can’t do!”

...

I acted like I heard nothing and just cut open a path like we planned. If worse comes to worse, I’ll just have to cut down that girl called Selena.

Just a little bit more.

Then vines gathered from all four directions to form a wall. A last stand, huh? A bit weak against me though.

I invoked Third Chant (Third Impact), and the black flames clad around my sword burned fiercer.

“GURUuuuAAaAa!”

One slash to cut down the wall of vines, and a body slam to break open the path.

Vines reached out for my feet immediately after.

“Boss!” Shumea yelled.

Keep quiet!

Gathering ether onto my feet, I forcefully tore free from the vines’ clutches with brute strength.

“Ha ha, that’s something, eh...”

“Hurry up and go.”

The path is clear now. There's no reason for me to play around with them any longer. If they fail, then I'll just have to kill that girl, Selena.

"I owe you one!" Shumea tore away the vines around Selena, then hugged her, while Yoshu protected her from the whipping vines with his shield.

On my end, I continued to cut down the vines around.

Virtually limitless stamina, wounds that heal nearly instantly, and an inhuman power, and yet...

With the anger from Reshia's kidnapping gone, I could once again think logically.

Could I really rule over the humans with just this strength?

If I kept going like this and conquered a village, will the humans really just sit down and accept it? Will we be able to procure basic goods by trading with a merchant?

Watching over the humans individually isn't possible, hence it is imperative that I find something to bind their hearts.

That something could be fear or it could also be admiration and devotion. But would the humans respect a goblin?

Impossible.

That leaves only fear.

I would have to kill countless humans in broad daylight to strike fear in their hearts, but... What about deserters? The moment we leave the forest, the number advantage will fall heavily to the humans. Even if the goblins try to monitor them, it'll be difficult. Especially, with all the casualties.

The goblins might reproduce quickly, but it'll still take some time before a goblin can become a full-fledged warrior.

It's impossible. Right now, the goblins don't have enough strength to rule over the humans.

Regardless how strong I am, regardless how strong my subordinates are, if we leave the forest now and attack the humans, only destruction awaits us.

How am I supposed to end this battle then? Where am I supposed to end this battle? When am I supposed to sheathe my sword?

“Umm... Goblin boss?” When Shumea called out to me, it finally occurred to me that the treeroots had stopped attacking.

Selena appeared extremely haggard on Shumea’s back, but she was clearly breathing.

Her long ears had been cut in half... A slave.

“Allow me to express my thanks again. You helped us a lot,” Shumea said as she impressively thanked me.

For a moment, I wondered just how this woman was able to be so fearless, but I quickly stopped bothering.

I’m sure women like her come around once in a while.

“Where are you going after this?” I asked.

“Nowhere in particular, actually,” Shumea answered.

“I see. Well, in any case, don’t approach the forest exit.”

Shumea was wide-eyed, clearly confused, while her younger brother looked at me meaningfully, clearly understanding the meaning behind my words.

“Though unintended, I did save your lives. Don’t waste it.”

Turning my back on them, I ran.

How and where should I end this battle?

I thought hard as I made my way through the forest.

Chapter 92: Cavalry

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	21
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Swordsmanship A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv1); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv40)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

I swept with the long sword in my hand.

That elven maiden dampened the mood a bit, but with the humans no longer able to stand united, the war was coming to an end.

I don’t know about the others’ situation, but as far as this place here is concerned, the humans have been scattered. Some of them fight, while others run.

As I hunted the crowd of confused humans, I looked around me.

The other goblins should be coming now if everything went well.

As I thought that and looked ahead, I smacked my lips.

“Of course, it wouldn’t be that easy.”

A group of humans headed my way as they tried to leave the forest. I brandished my black-flame clad sword and faced them.

“Come.”

One of them came thrusting with a spear. I cut him down, then threw him away. In no time at all, those who followed him all turned into corpses.

Each time I stirred up a blood bath among the humans, power would come gushing forth from the depths of my body. The air felt thicker, and it felt like no matter how much I moved, my body wouldn't tire. Like that I swung my sword and cut down the enemy. The trees of the forest rustled. The grass growing from the land, the thorny vines blocking the human, the leaves of the many branches above me... they all rustled as the wind passed, and each time the wind blew, it felt like something was supporting me.

The wind blowing from the forest gathered around me then scattered to the four directions.

I don't really understand, but it's not a bad feeling. I swung my sword as Instinct dictated, and I turned the humans into a sea of death. The corpses for the isles, the blood for the waters. Steam rose as fresh blood splattered onto my burning body.

Whenever I would look down at the humans, they would back away. When I took a breather for just one moment, the trace of white breath coming from my mouth rose up to the heavens.

"U, Uwaaaah!" Finally, one of the humans screamed and ran, and then the rest followed suit. My blade mercilessly penetrated their defenseless backs.



Though still in the embrace of the night god, rays of sunlight shone as the cavalry watched from outside the forest. Of the many soldiers outside the forest, the one responsible for the cavalry was Gowen's most trusted retainer, Corseo. He had served Gowen for many years now, and the long time spent in battle has left deep wrinkles upon his face. He was a taciturn man. So much so that it was said he would not laugh in the presence of the younger soldiers, but they respected him all the same.

The morning dew greeted the plains.

The place they were standing upon now was also once part of the Forest of Darkness. But under their orders, they had cut down monsters, and were cut

down in turn, all to expand their land and open a path to a blessed land.

Corseo sat within a simple tent meant only to endure the cold of the night as he ate a simple meal and glared at the forest.

“How is it, Commander?” The young soldier who acted as a messenger said as he brought medicine to the taciturn commander. The medicine the messenger brought was something akin to tea. By drying Shigeru leaves and boiling them in hot water, then drinking them, one could increase the flow of blood, improving one’s health. That was one of the so-called blessings of the forest.

The man who pioneered that tea was none other than the respected knight and feudal lord, Gowen Ranid, who himself was currently risking his life in the forest.

“We might have recovered the saint, but don’t let your guard down just yet. Have everyone be ready to sortie out any time.”

“Understood!”

The saint, Reshia Fel Zeal. The girl who received the oldest name in the tower, Fel Zeal, and the title of ‘Saint’. At first glance she appears to be no different from your average girl, but her face and figure and even the way she moved was unusually refined. Despite that, when Corseo saw her tearful face, he couldn’t help but find her pitiful.

She was young enough to be his daughter. Yet it was to such a young girl that such a solemn fate had been burdened. Just what was that god thinking giving her such a fate? He’d heard she had gone back safely despite having been kidnapped by the monsters, but...

“The holy knight, Master Gulland, is setting off for the capital. Shall we send them off?”

Corseo thought for a moment as he looked at the forest, then he shook his head.. “No need. It is enough to wish them a safe trip.”

“Ha!”

With this that girl’s safety should be ensured. All that’s left now are the soldiers that entered the forest.

Corseo didn't think the soldiers could possibly lose under Gowen's command, but things didn't seem to be going well according to the messenger that dropped by a few days ago.

"We should send them some materials again."

Horsemen could ride to and fro the cleared out road of the forest to send the necessary goods to the nearest village, yet there had been no news since last night.

Yuan and the young platoon leaders were tasked with the vanguard, while they, the cavalry, were tasked with watching the exit of the forest. It was a foolproof battle formation meant to secure the forest, yet for some reason, Corseo just couldn't rid himself of this strange unease.

He looked up at the flag of the feudal lord of the west. On it was a horizontally drawn long sword and above it a helmet. That was the crest of Gowen Ranid. Yet even as that glorious flag swayed with the wind, it seemed like clouds would come.

When Corseo looked up to the sky, it suddenly dawned on him that clouds had crept up over him cavalry without his knowing. The sword and the helmet swayed powerless against the blowing wind.

"Commander!" The horseman that left to scout the outskirts of the forest came back hurriedly to report to Corseo. Without even batting an eye for the usually necessary courtesies, the soldier took off his helmet and quickly spoke. "The attack force led by Lord Gowen has been destroyed by the monsters!"

"What!?" Lord Gowen!?" Corseo said angrily in shock.

The already pale soldier went even paler at Corseo's seemingly angry reaction. "Lord Gowen appears to be holding the line to allow the others to run away, but... There's no telling whether he's still alive. The soldier I received this info from also died immediately after. His wounds were just too much."

The severity of the situation made Corseo look up to the sky.

"...The surviving soldiers are headed here?"

"Most likely."

“Due to an emergency situation, I am changing our mission. From here on the cavalry will head out to save the attack force! Gather everyone!”

“Understood!”

Corseo didn't watch the soldier hastily leave as he muttered out the name of the knight he so respected, “Lord Gowen...”

There were two problems Corseo was facing now. One was saving the soldiers, and the other was dealing with the intercepting monsters.

Donning his armor, Corseo made his way through the cavalry as he mounted himself on his steed.

Once in the forest, the greatest advantage of the cavalry, mobility, will be greatly reduced. According to the report, there were hordes of monsters waiting for them in the forest, but exactly how many was a mystery. If they were fighting in the plains, the heavy cavalry would be able to handle even 300 monsters just fine, but the problem would begin once they entered the forest. They were on a rescue mission after all, so it was only a given that they would eventually have to enter the forest.

The forest will greatly hinder their movements. A hastily built road has been built, but it wasn't well-made. To the cavalry, the forest was essentially an execution ground made just for them, yet they would have to plunge into it if they were to save their fellow soldiers.

“Commander, First Battalion, Second Battalion, and the Third Battalion are good to go!” A young messenger said.

Corseo threw the flag at him. “Raise it.”

“Yes, Commander!”

The flag in which was drawn a sword and a helmet was raised high up to the sky.

“Hear me, men!”

Soldiers mounted and donned in heavy armor were lined up as Corseo pointed his sword right at them. Behind him the young messenger waved the flag.

“The force led by Lord Gowen has been destroyed by a great horde of monsters!”

The soldiers faltered at his words, but Corseo brought them back.

“So we must then, as a shield of the people, and as the sword of salvation for our brothers, risk our lives!”

The faltering soldiers were quickly silenced by Corseo’s words.

“Those fearful of you, leave! Those who cling to their lives, leave!”

Corseo raised up his sword.

“We are the shield of the people!”

At Corseo’s words, the heavy cavalry responded altogether.

“We are the shield of the people!” They said.

“We are the sword of the people!” Corseo said.

“We are the sword of the people!” They followed.

Corseo had no power over the sun, but the brilliance of his tempered sword struck through the clouds in the sky.

When Corseo saw that enough morale had been stirred, he gave out his orders. He sent out several men to contact the fief, while others he sent out to monitor the forest and scout.

Because the attack force was destroyed, they had no idea where the monsters or the surviving soldiers would be coming from, so reconnaissance would be necessary. Corseo left only 50 cavalries with him along the main road, while everyone else was sent to scout.

“Commander!” A soldier cried out as he pointed.

When Corseo turned to look at the direction the soldier was pointing at, what he saw was a monster he had never seen before. In some ways it certainly looked like a goblin, but it was huge.

“GURUuuUAaAaA!!!”

That bellowing howl seemed to devour the very heavens and the earth itself.

“Where are our allies!?”

About 10 soldiers could be seen running from deep within the forest, but one of them was quickly killed when a spear came flying from behind, skewering that soldier as it entered him.

“Save us!” The soldiers cried for help as a sword clad in flames of black struck at them from behind to tear their armor apart like sheets of paper. Blood splattered and their corpses were crushed underfoot. Then another soldier running away was taken by the leg and then smashed into the ground.

*Squash, sounded the body as it met the earth and bloomed a red flower. Another soldier was thrown to the stem of that flower. And when a soldier tripped and tumbled, the monster’s tail came whipping to crush him dead.

“U-Uwaah!?” A soldier cried out as he found himself tripping over a treeroot, but the only thing that greeted him next was the monster’s fist. The soldiers squirmed as they screamed, yet the sword kept coming for their legs.

In no time at all, the 10 soldiers running were all turned into corpses... Or almost, at least. Two of them breathed yet, but it was only a matter of time before the monster would claim their lives.

By the time Corseo came to, his hands were gripping the reins of his horse tightly.

—We will lose if we go.

That monster knew that they couldn’t fight properly inside the forest. That’s why it was taking its time to kill those last two. It was observing how they would react.

“Commander! We have to save our allies!”

—I know, but if we go, we will surely lose.

Corseo’s hands gripped his horse’s reigns so hard they started shaking.

“No! I don’t want to die! Save me!!!” That soldier crawled on the floor and cried out as he reached for the cavalry, but the sword clad in the flames of hell pierced him from behind.

“Commander!! We became soldiers to protect the people!” One of the

soldiers around him said.

Corseo knew about that soldier and the others with him. Their families were killed by monsters. It's not an uncommon story, and in fact, at least half of the soldiers here had the same story. Corseo was like a father to them as he taught them sword-fighting, horseriding, and even the taste of liquor.

"We are a sword of salvation to our allies... right?" Corseo said.

"Yes!" The soldier responded.

"All soldiers—"

Unsheathing his sword, Corseo pointed at the monster.

"—Charge! Save our allies!"

Corseo led 50 cavalries to subjugate the monster.



The soldiers involved in the initial raid are here, but the other goblins haven't caught up yet.

I guess it's not that easy.

But it can't be helped, it's not an easy battle after all. Besides, just because we have the advantage doesn't mean everything will go our way. That's just the sort of thing battle is.

I don't think they'd lose though...

The cavalry is getting closer.

I'll have to take them down here. The armor they're wearing has the same thickness as those armors made of iron and the weapon they're using has the brilliance of a lance.

Taking out the spear from the back of a soldier, I carried it on my other hand. A sword in one hand, a spear in the other. This'll be quick.

Clouds of dust stirred up as the horses' hooves beat against the ground. The white breath breathing out of their mouths left a trail of white as they galloped onwards, and their disheveled manes rustled wildly with their hastened gait. Mounted on each one of them was a soldier equipped with an iron armor and a

lance in one hand, dazzling brilliantly, eager to pierce me. Their eyes bloodshot, when they opened their mouths, what came out was a ghastly cry that seemed like their very souls were being strained.

“UoooOOOOO!!!”

Shifting the center of gravity forward, I held my long sword in a low stance, while I held my spear over my shoulder with a backhand-grip.

“OOOOAooo!!!”

As the humans cried out a battle cry that carried with it a considerable pressure, I bellowed back with my own.

“GURUuRUUuAAAAaAa!!”

Chapter 93: Ceasefire

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	21
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Swordsmanship A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv1); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv40)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

Jumping within the violently blowing gale, I turned to the first cavalry headed for me, then like the string of a bow, I bent my body and let loose my spear, shooting it forth to pierce through the chest of the horse.

That one soldier fell quickly, but the approaching cavalry did not slow down.

Damn, these soldiers are the real deal.

The approaching cavalry quickly filled in the empty position in their formation, then once again lined up their spears. This cavalry’s charge was not something that could be dodged easily.

Each and every single one of the horses within in that cavalry were huge, and yet the soldiers could handle them with enough proficiency so as to appear completely one with them. Moreover, their morale was exceedingly high, such that the sight of their fellow soldier falling could not even affect their speed.

What an annoying bunch!

But this was also the last battle. If I win, the battle will end in our victory, if I fall, the humans will fight with renewed vigor, and eventually, the goblins will be exterminated.

“GURURUuuOOOAAA!”

Bellowing out the World Devouring Howl to encourage myself, I kicked off the land, quickly shortening the distance between me and the cavalry, bringing me right in front of their lances.

“DIEEE!” The horseman right in front of me screamed with fervor. And before I knew it, lances were thrust at me from all directions. There was no room to dodge. All that was left now was for me to be skewered, but this was exactly what I was waiting for.

When the enemy raised up their lances, I concentrated my ether on my legs to instantly bring me up to the sky, where I then swung my sword with my right hand to cut down the shocked enemy. As I descended, I folded my hands to reduce the impact of my fall even a little.

Lances were extremely heavy. But it’s precisely because of that that they are capable of instantly killing an enemy. Such weight, however, wasn’t easy to handle. And some movements, such as instantly reacting to an opponent that’s jumped above you, was simply impossible.

One horseman watched wide-eyed as my hulking body crashed into him and his horse.

“It jumped!”

“Damn it, who cares! Surround it and kill it!”

The cavalry quickly turned around as they passed me, then they lined up their lances and charged toward me again. But while the vanguard might have been able to turn around now, the others were still catching up. Taking advantage of that, I took my sword and tore apart their rear.

The strength of this monstrous body kicked off against the ground, at the same time, I—

Accel

“My life is like a cloud of dust!”

—invoked Accel and swung my long sword at the rear end of the cavalry. Blood spurted as my blade entered the back of a soldier. As he fell down to the ground, I canceled my ether and left my sword stuck into the ground, while I picked up his lance.

I'm not used to using spears upfront, but I can at least cut and thrust with it, so it should be fine.

Brandishing my new found lance, I killed another enemy. If it's just for cutting and thrusting like this, this lance is actually better than the long sword because of its length.

"Damned beast can think!"

The cavalry managed to turn around, but because they forced themselves to turn around so quickly, the power behind their charge was much weaker this time around. In fact, their formation wasn't even in good order. It was a small difference, but to me that small gap was a gap all the same.

"Die, Monster!"

The lances came thrusting at me with the same power as before. No, they might even be stronger this time. But despite that, I threw my body into that line of lances as I brandished my spear.

Shield

"Let my body be inviolable!"

I struck out with my lance at one of the humans mounted, then as the cavalry kept running past me, I struck out again. The cruel sound of the steel tip of the lance bending resounded.

Throwing away the now useless lance, I picked up the long sword I'd left stuck on the ground.

I was able to block the more shallow wounds with Shield, but there were a couple of big ones that got past. I wonder if there's a more intricate reasoning behind how Shield's defense can be broken.

But this wasn't the time to be thinking about that. Kicking off against the ground, I brandished my long sword as the cavalry tried to turn around for the second time.

But the enemy was formidable, and this time around, they struck out their lances to protect their comrades. Only, that attempt to protect each other was just too rough compared to their earlier charge. I easily passed through their lances and swung my long sword against another one of their comrades.

I tore through the air as I quickly moved above the heads of the soldiers, then I sent my sword swinging down the neck of a horse. In an instant, both the horse and the soldier were cut, yet even that didn't make the enemy falter.

Truly men of courage! Annoying!

The enemy thrust their lance from below, and I blocked them with my sword. Another lance came for my chest, but I managed to jump away in time. As I did, I managed to take out another enemy who had just struck out his lance.

As soon as I landed back to the ground, two horsemen attacked me at the same time. Their lances came at me from in front at roughly the same time. In response, I lowered my waist and held my long sword in my armpit.

Enchant

"Turn me into a blade!"

As I canceled Shield, I gathered my ether into my long sword, and then as I invoked Third Chant, I cut down one of the two horsemen in one stroke. One of the lances managed to graze my sides, but I ignored it and cut that one horseman along with his horse.

Tsk, not enough time to deal with the other one!

I exhaled as I watched the other horseman turn around as the wound on my side burned with black flames. My body quickly recovered, but my long sword was already cracked. That's not to say it's shoddily made though. I mean I have been cutting down rider and horse together in single strokes. Making a weapon cut something it normally shouldn't be able to, of course, it would break. But still...

—I'd really like a weapon that won't break.

As I grumbled to myself, the enemy resumed their attack.

I noticed one of the enemy horsemen talking. That must be the cavalry commander!

The target ascertained, I pulled out the long sword from the corpse and swung it once lightly. I invoked Ruler's Wisdom III. It was a skill that could be activated the moment I fought against the enemy commander. Once invoked, the damage incurred would increase, but so would the damage dealt. It's a skill meant to end things quickly. As I thought that, I kicked off against the ground.

The goblins still haven't caught up. Something must have happened.

Otherwise, they should have already wiped out the enemy.

"GURUuuuOOAAa!"

I bellowed out a howl from the piths of my stomach. That howl carried with it the force sleeping within as it descended onto the enemy, but the enemy was well trained, and morale was high, causing the effects of my howl to be largely ignored. I mustered my ether as I ran. It was better to bring the battle to them before they managed to build up speed.

The enemy at the vanguard was none other than the commander himself!

—Good guts!

"I'll take you on, Monster!" The enemy commander yelled.

I bent my body so low I almost looked like I was about to get on all fours, a stance I assumed to make it harder for the enemy to reach me.

Our blades passed by each other as we sought to claim each other's life. The enemy's lance grazed past my shoulder, breaking my balance, but my blade swung down, cutting the soldier along with the horse.

"Gah...Got you!" The enemy commander smiled.

Before I could even wonder what he meant, a lance came piercing from behind him, skewering him along with me. I tried to block with my sword, but it was too late!

—Doesn't he care about his own life!?

While shocked several lances came thrusting at me. I promptly jumped back to mitigate the blow, but the pain was still there. I couldn't even land properly when I jumped back, and I tumbled to the ground, but even as I did, the sound of the hooves never stopped. The cavalry approached with blood lust and high

morale, further bolstered by the sacrifice of their commander.

My left arm's been completely done in. It won't even budge. At the same time, blood and guts were spilling from my left shoulder, though black flames had already begun to burn where they were.

I never looked down on the humans.

So why? Where did I let my guard down? The ogre lord and the orc king should both be far stronger than them. Even the gray wolves are faster than them. In fact, even the tribes are stronger. And yet...

They are strong!

The power to burn their own lives!

The resolve to sacrifice themselves for others!

This is not the might of one, but the might of many. They are strong. What am I doing hesitating against an opponent like this!?

I may have acquired the power of a monster, but I was once human myself. I should know just how much power humans can show when cornered. They could even kill gods when driven to a corner.

As I stood up, I invoked the Soul of the Berserk King.

“GURUuUuaAAaOGAAAaaGAAa!!”

In exchange for my sanity and pain...

—Give me an enemy, enemy, enemy! I will tear them to pieces!!

Cracks appeared on the hilt as I gripped it with too much power.

—Fuck off!

At the same time, I invoked my Defiant Soul, and fought back the mental corrosion. Like that I managed to take back the reins of reason, but if I were to ease up even a little, I would lose them again.

The enemy cavalry approached.

Ether gushed out, but I didn't use it to heal myself. Instead I gathered it to the tip of my blade as I released it into the world. Black flames summoned and they

clad my blade in their wrath.

But I didn't stop.

I mustered more and more ether until the long sword looked like a great sword as it burned with black flames. The wound on my left shoulder hadn't healed, and blood continued to flow.

I don't have time to deal with it now.

The approaching cavalry gathered together into a single unit as they charged toward me with their lances lined up low.

They clearly intended to scoop me up.

The land shook with the beat of the hooves as the horses breathed with ragged breaths in pursuit of my life.

I wielded the black flames over my shoulder.

—I won't lose.

“Take this!”

Right before the cavalry reached me, I jumped up into the air and invoked the King's Dance at the Edge of Death, a skill that would allow me to inflict twice as much damage as I've received.

And then I swung my evil sword.

With multiple skills invoked, the resulting damage was several folds greater than normal.

And when that great power erupted, it swallowed the entirety of the cavalry, leaving behind only a trace on the land.

Just like that, all 50 horsemen that made up that group of cavalry were gone.

As I landed on the ground, I canceled the skills, and sent my black flames to heal me.

Not good. I strained myself too much. I can even hear the sound of creaking coming from my body. The next battles might be a problem. I'll need to heal up as much as I can, but...

There's something I have to do first. I have to burn into the humans' minds that the forest is not to be approached.

I need to strike fear into their hearts and drive them away. Such that when they leave, they would say this among themselves, "Don't approach that forest."

I don't expect it to last forever. I don't need it to. One year, just that. By then I will have recovered, new soldiers will be under me, and the whole forest will be under control.

But until then, I need time.



As Gowen Ranid battled at the back, he rallied the scattered soldiers and headed for the exit of the forest. Along the way, he cut down the orcs, goblins, and kobolds. The sword in his hand had long lost its luster, but he continued to swing it against every enemy that came his way, almost as if it didn't matter as long as he had something to cut with.

He saved his subordinates that were attacked by the hulking orcs. He saved his subordinates that were attacked by beasts. He saved even the wounded soldiers who could no longer move. Gowen Ranid fought desperately. He used his own body as a shield and fought with his allies to fend off the monsters.

The ghastly sight of battle could be seen everywhere. Humans cut down the denizens of the forest, and were cut down in turn. But gradually, the battlefield moved away from the forest.

The goblins were faithful to the king's orders and tried their best to annihilate the humans, but even they suffered many casualties. Even Gi Za's druids were no exception when they tried to kill Gowen. But while there were many casualties, there weren't much in the way of actual fatalities. That was because Gowen himself was focused on retreating. Though the White Hand of Life could strengthen them, the range of her abilities were limited, making it impossible to fight a long battle.

When Gowen finally reached the exit, a rare shock filled him, though he did not let it show. Corpses of the cavalry littered the road. Every soldier was

equipped with heavy armor, but they were all cut down without exception, their armors torn apart. In fact, even their horses had been split in half.

Just what sort of power would it take to accomplish such a feat?

Gowen couldn't imagine it.

Then when he looked up, he saw the figure of a monster standing.

"Humans," it said.

It was a simple word, but to the humans who had fought so desperately to leave the forest, that voice sounded much like the devil of the underworld. That low-pitched voice seemed to pull the very souls from their bodies. And with the figure speaking clad in black flames, it was the very picture of a fire demon from hell.

"This forest is our land. Trespassing will not be forgiven." Each word was spoken with overwhelming pressure. "If you continue to invade our lands, we will strike back with the blade of vengeance to vanquish you... What say you?"

The clear trace of the violence that had occurred here greatly unsettled Gowen, but he did not let it show on his face. Keeping up a dignified front, Gowen valiantly faced the king. "...Very well. We will no longer encroach upon your domain."

With the soldiers heavily wounded and morale low, Gowen could not make the decision to fight the goblin king and the approaching horde from behind, so instead he promised the king a ceasefire.

Like that the old holy knight's audience with the goblin king ended, and the battle that began with a sword came to an end with only a few words. Yet even as one battle ended, another would surely come.

The king lost his beloved human and many of his subordinates, while the western feudal lord lost the soldiers he so painfully raised.

The winds of war would surely blow again, but until then, they would have to renew their strength.

As for when the next war would start, no one yet knew.



Level has risen.

21 => 36

Hasu

1 => 77

Bui

40 => 82

Gi Ga Rax

99 => 1 (Class UP: Noble to Knight)

Gi Go Amatsuki

54 => 92

Gi Gu Verbena

46 => 75

Gi Za

23 => 43

Gi Gi

1 => 14

Gi Ji

68 => 86

Gi Zu

46 => 1 (Class UP: Rare to Noble)

Gi Do

30 => 60

Gi Jii

87 => (Class UP: Rare to Noble)

Rashka

40 => 67

Ra Gilmi

87 => 2 (Class UP: Rare to Noble)

Ra Narsa

12 => 78

Hal

55 => 86

Alashd

70 => 91



Chapter 94: Those Whose Souls fell into the Abyss

Written below are those whose names were written on their tombstones.

The Wand of Destruction Belan

He put up a fight against the noble class goblin, Gi Gi, and his beast tamers, but died when the mad dog, Gi Zu, joined the fray. He sacrificed himself in his last moments to allow the humans to escape. Age: 37.

Lightning-Fast Knight

Challenged the goblin king and lost due to being ill-matched. Although he managed to keep his life after his battle with the goblin king, he was severely weakened after, losing even one of his arms. He lost his life to his own slave, Selena, after she went on a rampage.

Nameless Adventurer

One of the adventurers hired by Gulland. Though his name and struggles are unknown, it was confirmed that he died during the pursuit of the goblins.

Gowen's Platoon Leaders

Four entered the forest, only two left alive.

Corseo

Gowen's subordinate and commander of his cavalry. He sacrificed himself in an attempt to kill the goblin king. He is one of Gowen's most trusted subordinates.

Gi Da

Though fatally wounded by Gulland, he was able to safely lead his horde to the king. He died in the king's arms.

Gi De

Sacrificed himself to allow his subordinates to escape. Died under the Wand of Destruction, Bellan's, hands.

Gi Zo

Died under Gulland's Frenzied Sword skill.

Others:

Over 250 human soldiers died.

Over 40 beastmen and deminhumans died under Gene's hands.

20 orcs, 50 goblins, and 10 kobolds had their names engraved on a tombstone.

Chapter 95: Flowers for Those Who’ve Passed

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	36
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

After securing what was left of the village we’d set fire to, I gave some orders, and then I decided to return to the village. The old goblin and the noncombatants who fled during the battle rested at the village.

The humans won’t attack any time soon, but their aggressive attempts at expansion is worrying. The feudal lord of the west might have promised a ceasefire, but who knows how long that’ll last.

I need to renew our strength as soon as possible and expand.

But before that I should examine the goblins that evolved. It’s important to know every goblin’s capabilities. Such basic knowledge is needed to decide our future policies.

Let’s start with Gi Ga.

Status

Name	Gi Ga Rax
Race	Goblin

Level	1
Class	Knight; Guardian
Possessed Skills	Spear Mastery B+; Overpowering Howl; Omnivorous; Instant Kill; Adherent of the King; Spear Throw; Warrior's Soul; Indomitable Soul; Insight; Mounted Spear Mastery; Defender's Knowledge
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None
Abnormal Status	Battle power is reduced by 30% due to having to compensate with an artificial leg.
Beloved steed	Hakuou

He went up a class, but he turned to a knight instead of a duke. The conditions behind this phenomenon are currently unknown. There's not enough data. I'll have to confirm the other goblins' evolution conditions first.

The most eye-catching of the newer skills is the Defender's Knowledge.

Defender's Knowledge

After a mutual introduction, the chance of skills occurring during battle increases.

So in other words, the same conditions for a duel. Anyway, it makes him stronger, so that's good.

Status	
Name	Gi Jii
Race	Goblin
Level	3
Class	Noble
Possessed Skills	Spear Throw; Overpowering Howl; Spear Mastery C-; Assassinate; Sword Mastery C+; Savage Dog's Nose; Bat Ears
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None

Gi Jii is a noble class now. He's been with me since before we even annexed the orcs, so it's not strange to see him evolve. Gi Gi's also evolved... Anyway,

let’s see his skills. He’s always been put in charge of reconnaissance missions, so it seems he ended up specializing quite a bit.

Assassinate

No sounds are made when sneak attacking an enemy from behind. Works only for the first attack.

Savage Dog’s Nose

Distinguishing between allies is possible even without vision.

Bat Ears

Enemies up to one class above one’s own can be detected as long as it’s within a forest.

Looks like he’ll be most useful paired up with Gi Gi or Paradua’s iron legs.

Status	
Name	Gi Zu
Race	Goblin
Level	1
Class	Noble
Possessed Skills	Overpowering Howl; Throw Projectile; Spear Master B-; Instant Kill; Mad Shishi; Bite
Divine Protection	<div>ZuOru</div> Mad God
Attributes	None

If Gi Za and the others are the first generation, then Gi Zu here is the first of the second generation to become a noble class.

The Mad Dog skill has turned into the Mad Shishi[1] skill. He’s also gained the Bite skill. Let’s pray his resistance to the mad god has grown stronger too.

Mad Shishi

Battle power increases with the madness. Strength, agility, and defense will all increase.

Bite

Use your tough jaws to tear apart the prey.

That’s about it for the goblins of the Gi Village that reached the noble class. Of

the remaining survivors that evolved, they evolved from normal to rare.

Status		
Race	Goblin	
Level	1	
Class	Rare	
Possessed Skills	Throw Projectile; Overpowering Howl	Spear Mastery C+; Sword Mastery C+; Nose that Smells Death; Fierce Arms; Man-Eating Snake
Divine Protection	<div>Verid</div> Pitch Black	
Attributes	Death	

Verid

Pitch Black, you bastard. Don't stick your nose where it doesn't belong!

—Younger one, whatever could you mean? I'm lending you my power to help your ambition.

The thoughts of the snake on my right arm resounded within my mind.

An excellent goblin. It must be because he went through such a difficult battle that he grew up like this. There's a deep hatred toward the humans hidden in his eyes, however. And then there's these bunch of no good gifts he got.

Nose that Smells Death

When one's life is threatened, battle power will rise. Increases strength.

Fierce Arms

Can use two weapons at the same time. Skills invoked while dual-wielding are invoked a level lower.

Man-Eating Snake

Battle power is increased when fighting against humans. Strength and agility are increased.

—Younger one, I pray for your victory. Use him well.

Even his hatred, you mean.

I spat curses in my mind before I looked down at the goblin before me.

"I name you Gi Ba."

"I gratefully accept."

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	1
Class	Druid
Possessed Skills	Water Bending; Magic Manipulation; Deliberate; Nose that Smells Death; Seeker of Knowledge
Divine Protection	Water God
Attributes	Water

A goblin that uses the same element as the late Gi Zo. Nose that Smells Death... well, he's the same as Gi Ba, but Seeker of Knowledge, huh. Must be because of Gi Za's lectures. Well, it's not bad. I'll need a couple of commanders to rule over the humans after all. Any skill that can make commanders is a good skill in my book.

Seeker of Knowledge

Blessed by the Goddess of Wisdom, the growth of intelligence is increased.

Deliberate

Tends to think deeply about things. Due to this tendency, it is possible to invoke skills with a small amount of ether.

I bestowed a name upon the kneeling goblin.

"I name you Gi Bi."

"My sincerest devotion for this act of kindness."

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	1
Class	Rare
Possessed Skills	Overpowering Howl; Axe Mastery C+; Lead Belly; Beast Heart; Nose that Smells Death; Beast Tamer; Hand-to-Hand Mastery C+
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None

The next goblin that came was someone with the Beast Tamer skill. Now that

I think about it, the Gi goblins that lived through that intense battle were all heavily influenced by either the water mage, Gi Zo, the beast tamer, Gi De, or the spear-user, Gi Da. Considering their positions, I suppose it's not that surprising.

It's my first time seeing the Hand-to-Hand Mastery skill, but it seems to have a rank just like the other weapon skills.

Hand-to-Hand Mastery

Compensates unarmed combat. It is easier to deal fatal wounds against the enemy.

That seems to be it. I guess I won't know just how useful this is unless tested.

We'll have to thoroughly test it from now on.

"I name you Gi Bu."

"I gratefully accept, my king."

Status	
Race	Goblin
Level	1
Class	Rare
Possessed Skills	Throw Projectile; Overpowering Howl; Bite; Sword Mastery C+; Axe Master C+; Nose that Smells Death; Man-Eating Snake
Divine Protection	<div>Verid</div> Pitch Black
Attributes	Death
Abnormal Status	Battle power is reduced by 30% due to having lost an arm.

This goblin lost a limb.

The Man-Eating Snake skill should be useful when fighting with humans, but that hate seething hidden in their eyes... They really hate humans.

He lost his limb, so I'm sure it's a given, but I sure hope this hate doesn't get in the way of my ruling over the humans. I'll just have to be careful when using his sort.

"I name you Gi Be."

“I will burn even my life it it means vengeance to the humans.” The one-armed goblin nimbly bowed.

Then the last goblin came. Ra Gilmi of the tribes.

Status	
Name	Ra Gilmi
Race	Goblin
Level	2
Class	<div>Gadieta</div> Noble; The First Archer
Possessed Skills	Bow Mastery A-; Leadership B+; A Dying Wish's Successor; Triple Fire; Forest Dweller; Whispers of the Spirits; He Who Sees One-Hundred Li Ahead; Shadow Stitching; Makings of a Hero
Divine Protection	<div>ZaRuga</div> God of Bows
Attributes	None

Although of the noble class, he looks a lot more like the druids. In other words, that means to say he looks like a human. Blue skin, arms that extend just a little past the waist... If you dressed him in a robe, he’d look not much different from a human. The divine protection of the god of bows is a good thing too.

He Who Sees One-Hundred Li[2] Ahead

Accuracy when shooting with a bow is increased. The resulting damage is also increased.

Makings of a Hero

Will affect one’s leadership. Charm bonuses affect not only goblins of the same tribe, but also others.

Shadow Stitching

Can momentarily stop the enemy’s movements by stitching their shadows. Can affect enemies up to one class above one’s own.

Shadow Stitching... another useful skill. Since it works up to one class above, that means even the duke class can be affected by it. The power relationship between the villages might just change with this. Let’s hope Rashka doesn’t make a fuss...

With this I've finished examining the goblins.

After counting the goblins, I took those that could move with me to erect tombstones for those who passed.

Most of those who can fight in this village are already rare class. Those who survived without evolving are noncombatants. Namely, the young, the females, and the old goblin.

We picked up the corpses of the goblins who died and buried them in a corner of the village. The knight class, Gi Ga, the noble classes, the rare classes, and me... we each took the corpses of our brethren and gathered them.

From here on out, we'll have to fight the humans while increasing our numbers. We managed to secure the females, but from here on out, I'll have to be even more careful with them.

If they die, everything else will too. No one can escape death... even me.

We dug a simple hole for a tomb, buried the dead in it, covered them with dirt, and then planted a seed in the same spot.

"To the valiant goblins who died fighting!"

A fist to the chest as I bowed. There were those among the normal and rare classes who did not understand what I was doing, but the knight and noble class goblins all followed solemnly.

Gi Da! Gi Zo! Gi De!

You are true warriors!

All things shall one day cease.

Therefore, I shall conquer the world.

So that I may leave behind proof that I once lived, I will leave a trace of my existence on this beautiful world.

Footnotes:

[1] Shishi refers to the Chinese guardian lions I believe. [CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO](#)

[2] Li is an old unit with varying lengths. Supposedly, it is now standardized to 500 meters. [CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO](#)

Chapter 96: The King’s Guests

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	36
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

“...And? Why are you here?”

Standing before me was the human girl I saved before. Beside her was that elven maiden, listlessly looking around her, and her younger brother.

“Boss, you’re so manly I fell in love!”

Scratching my head with the butt of the spear in my hand, I thought, this is her alright.

“Don’t lie.”

I bitterly smiled at her, and she bitterly smiled back.

“Well, alright. Actually, we don’t have anywhere to go, so I was wondering if you wouldn’t mind having us for a while.”

I say... This girl really has nerves of steel. Those two behind her... The elven maiden is Selena, I think, and the male human should be her younger brother, Yoshu. The reactions they showed when I looked at them was still normal, but

this girl, Shumea, is just...

“You are humans. You should live with other humans in a human village.”

The goblins aren't very happy with the humans right now, and there are even those who possess the Man-Eating Snake skill. I might be able to keep an eye out for them, but it's still dangerous. And while I certainly intend to one day rule over the humans, I don't enjoy needless killing.

“Actually, we're slaves. Our former master died, and... I don't know if you know about this, being a goblin and all, but when a slave loses his master, whoever catches him will be his new master. It's an unwritten law, so it would be really dangerous for us to go back.” Shumea nonchalantly said.

The things I've heard from Reshia are well and good, but this woman, Shumea... The perspective she offers is that of someone who's lived through the worst of society. And from the looks of things, it seems that living in a human village is so difficult for people like her that she would literally rather live with monsters.

Bitterly smiling, I asked her, “I can see why you would prefer living with monsters, but you do realize that there are those among the goblins who kidnap the females of other species for the purpose of reproduction, yes? Are you not afraid of that?”

I smiled as I said that. It wasn't my intention, but the result was an utterly horrifying face, such that it looked like the devil himself was smiling.

“I'm sure I'll be fine as long I'm around you, Boss.” Shumea smiled.

That innocent smile of hers made me knit my brows.

“Sis!” Youshu screamed.

It was such an odd situation that I was actually stupefied.

“Well, alright. You do what you want. In the name of the king, I promise you safety in these lands,” I said.

“Hear that, Yoshu, Selena! Thank you so much, Boss!” Shumea said.

“Understood, I'll inform the others,” Gi Za said, having come out of nowhere, as he looked carefully at the elf and the humans. He looked especially taken in

by the elf.

“Eek... A druid!?” Selena said in surprise.

Gi Za knitted his brows.

“You should be more careful with your tongue, little girl. I am not a druid, but a shaman,” Gi Za said as he grabbed Selena’s hand.

“L-Let go! What are you planning!?” Selena cried.

“What, you say? I want you to teach me a couple of things. Now, hurry! We have much to do!” Gi Za said.

“W-Wait a moment! Boss!” Shumea cried out to me.

The way he talks is really just begging for misunderstandings.

I continued to watch them for a bit, but once things looked like they were about to escalate, I stepped in.

“Gi Za, Selena thinks she’s about to be raped,” I said.

“What!?” Gi Za said in surprise as he glared sharply. He first turned to the frightened elven maiden, then to the humans, and then back to me. I nodded to the unbelieving goblin while holding back my laughter, and Gi Za finally let Selena go.

Immediately, the frightened elf ran behind Shumea. Seeing all this happen brought a huge grin on my face.

“To rid ourselves of this misunderstanding, what Gi Za wants you to teach him is the elven knowledge on magic.”

Gi Za nodded pitifully as I said that, while the frightened Selena looked alternately between me, Gi Za, and Shumea.

“I think you’ll have to give up for today, Gi Za,” I said.

“Sigh... I suppose it can’t be helped. I don’t enjoy forcing others either,” he said resignedly.

When Selena saw that, she finally heaved a sigh of relief.

“Gi Za, let the others know they’re my guest.”

“Guest? Not your treasure?”

“Yes, is there a problem?”

“No, I misspoke.”

“Inform the newly evolved nobles to gather too. I have yet to give them their family names.”

After Gi Za nodded, he vanished like the wind.

It seems his wounds are alright now.



Kneeling before me were the newly evolved nobles. Namely...

The ancient beast warrior, Gi Gi, the assassin, Gi Ji, the mad shishi, Gi Zu, Ra Gilmi of Ganra, and the shaman, Gi Za.

I started off with Gi Gi, who evolved during the trip back to the fortress. He would be one of the more senior one among them.

“I name you Orudo. Hence forth you shall be known as Gi Gi Orudo. With this name I give you the right to raise your own household.”

“My deepest sincerity to the king,” Gi Gi Orudo respectfully bowed.

Next was the assassin, Gi Ji; a goblin who excels in reconnaissance missions thanks to that powerful nose of his. He will be a crucial member from here on out, especially once we leave the forest.

“I name you Arsil. Hence forth you shall be known as Gi Ji Arsil. With this name I give you the right to raise your own household.”

“I shall use my strength for the king.”

Next was the mad shishi, Gi Zu.

I really wish he’d get that ferocious tendencies of his under control. Thanks to it, he could be a good match against me, but because of it he’s never suffered defeat.

“I name you Ruo. Hence forth you shall be known as Gi Zu Ruo. With this name I give you the right to raise your own household.”

“I am forever your loyal retainer, my king!”

He seems alright for now. Looks like he’s able to keep that madness of his in check.

After Gi Zu Ruo left, the next one that came was Ra Gilmi. I’m not sure what to think about giving a last name to a hero of Ganra, but since he wants it himself, I suppose I’ll have to oblige.

“I name you Fishiga. Use your power for the future you seek.”

“I shall expend all of my strength to meet the king’s expectations.”

But you actually fight for Princess Narsa, right? You really don’t have to give me lip service. After all, to aid me is to aid the princess, and thus, the rest of the tribes.

Last but not the least was Gi Za.

I think I’ll name him something with ‘za’.

He seems to have picked up on my mischievous intentions, as he made a ‘^’-shaped smile as if he’d eaten a bug or something.

“Gi Za... I name you Za!”

“Hey!”

“It’s a joke. I name you Zakuend. I expect much of you.”

“Hmph. I’ll take it.”

With this I’ve finally concluded my business with the newly evolved.

Then as if he was waiting for it, a goblin stepped up.



“King!”

It was the newly evolved rare, Gi Ba, who came before me.

“Why did you allow a human into the village!? They bring us nothing but misfortune!”

Gi Ba grit his teeth hard enough to be heard as he said that, but Gi Ji Arsil did not take kindly to his words, and he pinned him down.

“You disagree with the king’s orders?” Gi Ji Arsil said as he pointed his sword on Gi Ba’s neck. The moment Gi Ba showed the slightest act of resistance, that sword would come cutting down to claim his life.

“Enough, Gi Ji Arsil.”

“Ha!” Gi Ji kept his glare on Gi Ba even as he sheathed his sword.

When Gi Ba turned to me, our gazes met, and the goblin shook for a moment, but he endured my gaze.

“Hear me, goblins! One day I shall rule the world. Humans, beasts, elves, and of course, you goblins as well. When the day comes, I will become king of all!”

I was not speaking it, I was declaring it.

“Don’t you hate them king!?” Gi Ba asked.

“I don’t hate all of them. Only those who stole my treasure,” I said, at which Gi Ba cast his eyes down. “I won’t tell you not to hate them. But should you reach a point where you cannot help yourself but want to kill my guests, then come to me. I will neither hide nor run.”

Gi Ba grasped a lump of earth within his hands as he grit his teeth.

It seems Verid’s influence has been progressing faster than expected. If they lose their minds, I will have no choice but to put them down myself. Executing one’s subordinates is not something a king could push onto his subordinates. Such an act would put to shame the title: king.

Look! Because of what you did controlling them has gotten so difficult!

—Hmph. The divine protection was too strong, it seems. A pity.

I spat curses at that overly egocentric response.

—If worse comes to worse, you should put him down. You’ll be able to devour our strength too.

This time the one to grit his teeth was me. I grit them so hard it seemed like my molars would break. I can’t let that happen. I won’t let them end up as you wish.

My subordinates are my blood and flesh. All of them.

I have no intentions of shirking away from my duties of cutting off the useless parts, but as much as possible...

“If you understand, withdraw,” I said, making my voice as calm as could be to admonish the goblin and help cool his head.

Since you had the fortune of becoming a rare class, then so long as you have the strength, you should be able to overcome this ordeal.

Become one who can bring together warriors to become a pillar that will support this country. If you cannot do that, then I might have to dye my hands in the blood of an ally. It’s a terrifying thought, but it’s not something I must fear.

I have made my resolve.

I can’t turn back.

I am already on the path of world domination.



Verid’s influence on Gi Ba has grown stronger.

Verid’s influence on Gi Be has grown stronger.



Chapter 97: The Hero’s Return

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	36
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

The gray wolf, Cynthia, growled as she chased a rabbit. Hunting was well and good, but I pray she doesn’t get lost. After successfully hunting the rabbit, she came running back to me with the rabbit in her mouth, gently placing it before my feet before grooming herself and then yawning.

It seems she intends to give me a share.

“You don’t need to hold back. Have your fill.” I patted Cynthia as I sat cross-legged next to a spear deer I’d hunted.

“Kuun,” Cynthia said back.

Most of the tribes had already gone back to the fortress, so I took Cynthia with me to visit the orc village. The orcs helped out a lot in the previous battle. If it weren’t for them, more blood would have been spilled, so I need to reward them. I’m going there to talk about that reward.

There’s another reason why I’m taking Cynthia along, and that’s because Gastra disappeared during the war. Hopefully this trip will cheer her up.

The orc village is situated north of the lake. It used to be Gi Za Zakuend's former village. Speaking of which, he's been really interested in learning the elf's knowledge, but it seems he just can't convince the elf to talk even after talking to Shumea.

It could be a problem if he becomes too obsessed with his pursuit of knowledge, but... he's definitely an odd one. The druids under him are all intelligent, so at one point, I was hoping they would become horde leaders, but... From the looks of things, they're more like scholars than generals.

As far as those who could lead a charge go, there's Rashka from the tribes. From the village there's Gi Ga Rax, who also happens to be the only knight goblin so far, the sword god's adherent, Gi Go Amatsuki, and the mad shishi, Gi Zu Ruo.

As for those who could lead from the back, there's Ra Gilmi Fishiga from the tribes, and Gi Gu Verbena from the village, whose right-hand man would be the wide-eyed Gi Jii. Unfortunately, the latter has his hands full just assisting, so having him lead a horde himself will still take some time.

As for someone who could oversee the whole battlefield, unfortunately, there's none. I should actually take that seat for myself, but I find it difficult to just sit back and watch my subordinates die without doing anything. As soon as I see them in danger, an urge rushes through me, compelling me to go.

This body is actually really difficult to control.

As for who would take that seat, such a goblin might one day appear, or I might find one in the distant lands.

Hmm... Attacking other lands, huh...

"Shall we go, Cynthia?"

After seeing Cynthia finish up the rabbit she hunted just a while ago, I carried the spear deer over my shoulder, and we began walking for the orc village.



The capital was in high spirits because of the hero's return.

Crowds gathered at the sides of the road to see the heroic return of the holy

knight adventurer. Castle guards stood watch to ensure no one got hurt, though many still did. Little girls threw flowers from the second floor of a building, while children ran after the carriage the hero and the saint rode, and lavish adventurers flicked chips in the various bars as they merrily drank and sang.

“Won’t you answer the crowd?” Gulland asked.

An open carriage pulled by two white horses had been prepared specifically for the day’s festivities. Gulland stood on the carriage with an air of composure, while Reshia hung her head down. Her appearance was a rare sight to begin with, but with the white kimono that the king had ordered to be made for her, she looked exactly like a noble saint who would offer prayers to the gods.

“...” Reshia did not respond, only quietly looking down as if the crowd did not exist.

Gulland smacked his lips, but he continued waving at the crowd.

Not long after the carriage passed by the castle gates, and as it closed, the saint and the hero exited the carriage. Soldiers packed the castle; they looked on with gazes of envy at the hero, while gazes of longing and pity fell upon Reshia.

“The king has been expecting you, great hero, Gulland. And you as well, Lady Reshia Fel Zeal. We are glad to see you safe and well.”

It was a middle-aged knight who came out to greet them.

“Allow me to escort you.”

The saint and the hero wordlessly followed, passing through stone-built halls and marble pillars to a giant door from which scarlet carpet had been rolled out, beside which imperial guards donned in full armor stood watch, each with a spear in hand.

“The hero has returned,” the old knight declared.

The soldiers opened the giant door from outside, revealing the figure of King Ashtal on his glorious throne and the countless people of influence standing beside the scarlet carpet.

“Please,” the middle-aged knight prompted.

Gulland and Reshia proceeded toward the throne, stopping mid-way to solemnly kneel before the king.

“I am pleased to see your safe return, Knight of Storms,” the king said as he leaned onto the armrest of his throne.

“It is only by the grace of the king that I am here today,” Gulland said.

“...Lady Reshia, the Saint, it is a pleasure to meet you. I am Ashtal, the king of this country,” the king said.

“...My deepest thanks for rescuing me, Your Highness,” Reshia said.

When Reshia brought up her face to speak to the king, several onlookers heaved out sighs upon seeing how beautiful she was.

“You seem to be deeply connected to the Ivory Tower, enough to make one feel envious...”

“Not at all...”

Scorn and suspicion reflected on the king’s eyes as he spoke, but almost as if he were wearing a mask, the light of those emotions never affected the gentle smile on his face. When Reshia inadvertently looked back down, the king spoke again from high up in his throne.

“I would wish you a quick return to the tower, but after being caught by monsters, I’m sure you’re exhausted. Please feel free to rest in my castle in the meantime.”

“Much thanks for the king’s consideration.”

Reshia spoke curtly, this time without even looking up from the carpet.

“Now then, Knight of Storms.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

“The saint would surely be troubled to spend her time idly in the castle with no one to talk to. Hence, I order you to accompany her.”

Voices of admiration rose from the onlookers upon seeing how considerate the king was.

“As the king commands.”

“That’ll be all.”

The first to leave was the king himself, followed by Reshia and Gulland, and then the rest of the onlookers. If one listened closely, most of those present spoke of Reshia’s beauty or Gulland’s heroism, while extolling the king’s thoughtfulness.

“This way,” the middle-aged knight said as he brought Reshia and Gulland to a room not too far from the throne. It was gorgeously decorated, having been built for guests. When the middle-aged knight opened the door, a familiar girl dressed in armor saw them and went wide-eyed. It was Lili.

“Lady Reshia!”

“Ms. Lili.”

When the middle-aged knight saw Reshia and Lili run up to each other, he quietly excused himself.

Gulland snorted. “If you need anything, just ask the servants, o Holy Saint.”

There was a vulgar smile upon his lips as he turned his back.

“Until then, pitiful princess, who fell in love with a goblin.”

It wasn’t until when Gulland finally closed the door that Reshia finally showed her grief.

“Lady Reshia... I’m sure it’ll be alright, I— Uwah!”

“uUUOon!”

Lili tried to console Reshia when Gastra suddenly stuck his head out of her chestpiece. The gray wolf looked around him to check if the coast was clear, then it freed itself from the tight and narrow space, shaking its head as it barked.

“...You’re doing well.” Reshia pulled Gastra out, and the gray wolf licked her cheeks, unabashedly sticking its nose onto Reshia.

Lili happily smiled as she watched the short exchange between the gray wolf and the saint. Just a little bit, a smile had returned to her face.

“What will you be doing now?” Lili asked.

“I’ll have to stay in the capital for some time, though I plan to return to the Ivory Tower soon.”

“The Ivory Tower...”

Home to the sages in a certain country to the snowy north. It sounded like something straight out of a fairytale, but it truly did exist, and many bureaucrats have come from it.

“Umm... You know, Lady Reshia, if you wish it, I wouldn’t mind sneaking out of the castle with you to go back to the forest. I’m sure Gastra would prefer to go back too.”

“No, if I do that the forest will be invaded again. I can’t have that.”

Reshia knew from her audience with the king just now that the humans attacked because someone from the Ivory Tower had sent out a request. A person who could move even the kings of other nations was rare even within the tower. She could think of several such people who could, but which one exactly was a mystery. Regardless, not one of those people was someone who could easily be dealt with.

“Then...”

“There’s something I want to do in the capital. I’ll be relying on you to get us permission to go out, alright, my dear knight?”

Reshia sweetly smiled and Lili nodded.



The king’s office. If the throne was responsible for dealing with foreign entities, then the king’s office could be said to be the main pillar of the government. Documents would be sent to it every day, and important people would use it for secret conferences, making it an indispensable room for the country’s wellbeing.

It wasn’t as gaudily decorated as the throne, but the furniture used were still of the highest class, making anyone who saw them go wide-eyed at the staggering value of the furnishing.

It was in that very room that a certain knight was kneeling on the blue carpet

as King Ashtal rested his chin on his hands atop the desk.

“Gowen... You really lost 250 elite soldiers?” The king asked.

“My deepest apologies,” Gowen said.

Gowen ran to report to the king as soon as he could that he did not even have time to change out of his battle-worn clothes. The speed at which he returned overtook even Reshia and Gulland causing much surprise to the king.

‘The expedition has failed.’

Gowen ran back as fast as he could despite his creaking old bones just to report that message. Upon hearing it, the king immediately decided to hold a grand ceremony to receive the saint and the hero.

A hero was necessary to hide defeat.

“Gene Marlon has also been killed in action... He was a bit of an eccentric, but his skills were the real thing.”

The king became thoughtful for a moment before continuing.

“How long will recovery take?”

“2 years, Your Highness.”

“2 years... Do you think the monsters will stay put until then?”

“They can’t win a battle on the plains.”

“So, we need time then... In that case, I’ll have to appoint a new holy knight.”

He would have preferred to send his army to the forest at once, but there was much unrest to the south and north. Gene Marlon was in charge of the south. Once the various cities catches wind of his death, who knows how the enemy would move? The bandits of the snow god’s mountains have also recovered during Gulland’s absence, and have recently started to become active.

The kingdom could be here today because of its strong army. If that military prowess were to weaken, the surrounding enemies would surely bare their fangs and attack. What they needed to prioritize now was not the battle with the monsters but with the other humans.

“Destruction Knight, Zelkov, Iron-Armed Knight, Gowen, Storm Knight, Gulland,” King Ashtal looked at Gowen, “Twin-Swords Knight, Vald, Decapitation Knight, Sivara, Sharp-Eyed Knight, Jize, and the late lightning-fast knight, Gene Marlon. Do you know anyone with skills equal these people?”

Gowen couldn't answer. The holy knight system was an important cornerstone in protecting the country. Each and every one of its members held power comparable to that of an entire army. Its members were both renowned and powerful, but one of those members was missing now.

Gene was in charge of the south. His absence would surely mean the worsening of the war among the various cities.

Gulland was another big name, but he was in charge of the snow god's mountains to the north, which bandits frequented. He could not leave his post unattended. And of course, neither could Gowen, as he needed to keep watch over the Forest of Darkness. The rest of the knights also had their respective missions.

“Speaking of which, that girl had a knight with her, didn't she?”

“Yes... Lili Aureya. A commoner's daughter, and an adventurer.”

“Hmm... Aureya... Aureya... huh.”

Ashtal muttered the name to himself several times before suddenly turning to look up toward the ceiling as if recalling the past.

“The saint... What do you think of that girl?”

“A wise young girl, Your Highness. Though there must be something else to her for the Ivory Tower to be so attached to her.”

The power to heal was one thing, but even that could be found after looking through a hundred people or so.

“Something else to her... I have an idea as to what that might be, so I want to do a little something as insurance.”

“Insurance, you say...”

Ashtal smiled. “I will appoint Lili Aureya as a holy knight.”

“But...”

Her name held no power, Gowen thought. And even her strength wasn't sufficient.

Vashinant

“Give her Sky Splitter, that should bring her name up to par.”

The cursed sword of the royal family, Vashinant. It was difficult to control, but whoever wielded it would surely become famous.

“Why her?”

Gowen couldn't help but ask upon seeing how partial the king was being. If it was only as insurance, it would be enough to just capture her.

“The Aureya... I was wondering where I'd heard it before, and I remembered just now. The old blood of Aureya. A long time ago before the royal household of Germion ruled these lands, the ruler was Guansham Aureya. He wielded Vashinant in one hand and fought the forest. Theirs was a clan of swords that caused blood to rain.”

And now, 100 years later that same cursed sword would return to its rightful owner.

“Their clan collapsed 80 years ago due to problems concerning the throne's successor, but with a crisis at hand, the cursed sword shall return to their hands. Don't you find such a story romantic? Have her work hard. In the worst case, just 2 years will do.”

Gowen could not say anything to retort the king's confidence.

“As the king commands...”

A few days later, Lili Aureya would be summoned by the king.

Chapter 98: Oath of the Sword

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	36
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

When we arrived at the orc village, Bui came out to greet us, and I handed the spear deer over.

“Umm... Thank you,” Bui timidly said as he looked alternately between me and the speer deer. “So, to what do I owe the honor of this visit?”

All the other orcs except for Bui have locked themselves in their houses, careful not to make a single eek. They were acting as if someone troublesome had come.

Cynthia herself has started growling by my feet, but it’s really nothing to mind.

“I thought of discussing your reward for the recent battle.”

Bui looked back at me with surprise. “Oh, you don’t have to... really. We just so happened to fight with the humans, so...”

“You don’t have to be so reserved. It’s not like I plan on forcibly pushing

something troublesome on you.”

“Ah, but...” Bui looked troubled.

I chuckled. “It’s not a bad thing not to have any desires, but you should at least hear me out.”

“Alright.”

“I’m thinking of giving you the land from to the south.”

“Exactly how much land are we talking about?”

Gotcha.

Originally, the area north of the lake was designated to be the orcs’, but the recent battle has reduced the goblins’ numbers. So I thought of giving the south – the village region, in other words – to the orcs.

Bui became thoughtful before speaking again. “There’s something I’d like to confirm... Do you mind?”

“Go ahead.”

“If you give us these lands, exactly where do you plan to hunt?”

Right... In the past, we hunted the region south of the lake to feed on giant spiders, spear deer, and double heads, but with the recent battle, I’ve been thinking of moving.

“We’re temporarily pulling back to the Fortress of the Abyss to the west.”

“Wouldn’t that mean you’ve lost against the humans?”

There was a fervor hidden behind those words I didn’t expect, causing me to be taken aback for a moment. As expected, though seemingly timid, a monster was a monster. It was almost as if he was challenging me.

“Do you plan on competing with me in place of the humans then?” I mischievously asked back, but disappointingly, Bui’s shoulders quivered.

“One year.”

“Excuse me?”

“When the twin moon gods appear for the 350th time, we shall once again

battle the humans.”

“So we are to be the breakwater until then?”

What a thoughtful orc, I thought, chuckling.

“We have a ceasefire with the humans, though I don’t know how long they plan on keeping it.”

Caution is necessary. There is no way the humans would merely sit idle after having suffered so much. Right now, I need to increase the goblin population as much as I can. To that end, I will stretch out my hand to reach lands unknown, and bring to me the scattered goblins and strengthen our horde.

The humans set us back a little, but from now on, I’m going to have the goblin forces gather around the fortress.

“I will leave it to you what to do with the southern lands in our absence. You could hunt them if you so wish, or you could ignore them.”

Bui became thoughtful again.

“This is the reward I give you. Whether you accept it as a reward or not, however, is up to you.”

“...King of Goblins, I will accept that reward,” Bui said with resolve in his eyes.

“Oh, and do tell your people not to touch the kobolds. They can be of use if you feed them.”

“The kobolds? If I recall, they fought in the previous war too...”

“They are also my subordinates.”

After saying what I needed to say, I carefully turned around so as to not step on Cynthia, who was playing by my feet, then I went back to the village.



When I returned, the sword god’s adherent, Gi Go Amatsuki, knelt before me with a brooding face. It was almost dusk; the sun almost sunken as the arms of the night god stretched out to dye the world in his color.

“O king... Please hear my request.” There was a long wound on his face from his brows to his cheeks incurred during the war.

“Speak,” I said.

“I request a duel,” he said.

There was no killing intent as he lay prostrated, but there was a weight behind every word spoken.

“...Very well.”

“Please wait, Your Highness! Gi Go! What are you thinking!?” The knight class, Gi Ga, asked when he heard my conversation with Gi Go as he struck out his spear before Gi Go. Killing intent filled him as he demanded Gi Go to explain himself, but the latter only looked back fearlessly. There was a pressure emanating from him that only those who have resolved themselves could give off.

“Gi Ga, it’s fine. I am the king. I must accept this challenge.”

I don’t have a great sword though, so I’ll have to make do with a decent long sword.

After swinging the long sword once, I ordered Gi Go to go all out.

“Gi Go Amatsuki! Come! Do not hesitate, lest you wish to regret this duel!”

“You don’t need to tell me!”

Gi Go brandished his curved sword and faced me. There were no openings in his stance, proving just how much his concentration and his martial strength have been tempered.

The curved sword held under his arm screamed as he ran toward me. I used my long sword as a shield in response, then I immediately took back my sword, inclined my weight forward, and then let loose a scooping slash from below. If it were a great sword in my hands instead, just the pressure behind this attack would have been enough to strike fear into him, but what I had was a dainty long sword. Pulling off such a feat was beyond its capabilities.

My sword tore through the air, but despite the setting sun’s light being barely enough to see anything past the silver light of the sword, Gi Go dodged.

A spectacular read. Predicting my attack and then dodging with the least movement, then—

He sent a blow just slightly below my sword toward my neck. With the centrifugal force empowering it, it was a decisive attack.

—GATSUN!

Our swords crossed. I took a step back and exhaled to concentrate, then as I took a step forward, so did Gi Go.

Right in that very moment where my foot was about to leave the ground, Gi Go took a step forward and slashed downwards. The speed of that sword was such that it would reach my side before I could even react!

Shield

“Let my body be inviolable.”

An armor of flame burst out from ether to wrap around me, protecting me from Gi Go’s curved sword, while I swung down my sword to knock his weapon away.

“Why?” I asked with my sword pointed at the goblin.

“King, please punish me...” He desperately said.



The whispers of the sword god compelled him to fight the strong, so much so that at some point, he stopped being able to tell whether it was truly because of the sword god that he wished to fight or simply because he himself desired it.

Not a day passed where he could not hear the sound of swords clashing. He even started to feel like his very life lived within his curved sword. And as sounds of blood spilling resounded, a voice echoed within, saying—

‘Cut down the strong’.

‘With these arms, these hands, these fingers... Cut them down!’

‘Even if you lose your arms! Your eyes! Your legs! Even if you lose your life!!’

‘If you lose your arms, swing your sword with your mouth!’

‘If you lose your eyes, listen closely with your ears!’

‘If one of your legs is crushed, cut it off!’

‘If your chest is pierced, cut the enemy down before you die!’

Like that the sword god slowly took Gi Go’s consciousness away and made him swing his sword.

Cut, cut, cut cut cut CuT CuT CuT CUT CUT CUT *Cut* CUTTTttt!!

That voice seemed to resound even in the very breath he breathed. Gi Go looked at the king half-dazed.

“I request a duel.”

Before he knew it, he had challenged the king.

For the first time, he realized just how terrifying the king was.

The king was truly overwhelming, enough to make him imagine that what was before him was actually a mountain. Even though the king was not using a great sword, the pressure the king emanated was still beyond his imagination.

Dodging the king’s sword with the least movements and feeling the erupting wind from the king’s sword filled him with joy.

The sound of swords clashing called forth both fear and joy within him.

Our king... Illuminates the path and leads us to a brighter tomorrow; an existence like no other.

And yet I pointed my sword at him...

I have sinned...

But there was no doubt that the simple joy of battling the strong filled him.

The two conflicting emotions stirred him up from within.

He was going mad. Gi Go smiled each time he thought of it.

He was losing his mind over his sword.

When the king showed an opening, he unleashed his blade.

—Reach him!

Only to reach a wall of black flames. The flames of the underworld protect the king.

As the king's sword descended, his curved sword fell and cracked.

When he came to, the king's sword was pointed at him.

Gi Go himself knew that he had committed a grave sin. Hence, he would voice no complaints even if the king punished him there and then.

"Why?" The king asked.

But Gi Go could do no more than lower his head as much as he could.

"King, please punish me..."

The great king would not run from any challengers. And with his great heart, he would surely forgive him. The fact he asked for an explanation was proof of that.

But he could not ask to be forgiven. If he did, his sins would never be cleared. And if he were to commit the same sin a second time, he would not be able to forgive himself, not even if the king forgave him.

When that time comes I will cut my own neck!

"Explain yourself."

Gi Go froze. He could not lie. If he was asked to explain himself, he would have no choice but to answer.

"...I have lost myself to the power within me. Please exact judgment, My King."

Gi Go bowed as if offering his neck.

"...I knew you were struggling with the divine protection you received. I acted dumb precisely because it was a battle against yourself. Gi Go, a swordsman of my goblins, I pass judgment as your king."

Silenced filled the area as Gi Go waited for his punishment.

"You shall not kill until the appointed day. This shall be your punishment, Gi Go Amatsuki."

A vow not to kill.

"I swear on my life, I shall not kill until the appointed day."

His head rubbed against the ground as an oath to the king was sealed.



“Umm... Is there something you need?” Yoshu asked.

After I ordered everyone else to leave, the only ones left in the room were me and Yoshu.

“I have a request.”

Yoshu listened carefully, and I continued.

“Go with Gi Go for a year.”

“Huh? But Mr. Gi Go is...”

“Yes, I let him off with an oath not to kill. But whether *that* would stay put or not here is another question.”

Gi Go will probably leave the village. I didn’t expect the sword god’s whispers to affect him so much that he would point his sword at me.

“...So, in other words, you plan to use me to fetter him?”

I smiled at that. As I thought, Shumea’s younger brother is sharp. He’s always with his sister, but normally, former slaves tend to have cold and callous personalities.

“Exactly.”

“If I refuse...”

“You want to know?”

For just a moment, Yoshu looked at me with a sharp gaze, but then he breathed a sigh.

“...No. Please take care of my older sister. I will surely return after a year. If I find out something has happened to my sister’s body then, I’ll be sure to chase you until the ends of the earth.”

Fire burned within his eyes as he said that. As expected of someone who has received the flame god’s divine protection, who is a member of the fire god’s household.

I returned that gaze as I struck my long sword into the ground.

“I swear it on the king’s honor.”

Yoshu sighed deeply.

“...I’ll be leaving immediately then. Please take care of my sister, and Ms. Selena.”

“Tell that one yourself too.”

“Alright.”

“Don’t you have anything to say to your sister?”

“Tell her I’ll definitely come back alive.”

“Sure.”

As I watched Yoshu run off, I thought of Gi Go who was walking far away in the embrace of the night god.



Gi Go took only his curved sword with him as he left the village. The king had forgiven him, but he couldn’t forgive himself.

He couldn’t stay in this village. Not until he could bring the sword god’s temptations under control.

He would bet his very pride to find a way to.

When he touched the curved sword hanging from his waist, he could hear the sword god’s whispers, but it was distant now, most likely because of his oath to the king.

The night was quiet. When he thought about it, it’s been a long time since he was last alone. He hadn’t been alone since the king picked him up.

The loyal Gi Ga, the wise Gi Gu who could use other goblins well, and although annoying, the knowledgeable Gi Za. With them around, the village should be fine.

But what the king yearned for was a distant dream. A great ambition.

Gi Go decided to use his life to realize that dream. He couldn’t waste around

idly.

Hence he would temper his sword, and then return to the king.

“Mr. Gi Go!”

The sound of footsteps and a human’s voice.

“You’re...”

“It’s Yoshu. The king’s guest, Yoshu.”

“Why are you here?”

“I have a message from the king.”

“...From the king?”

When Gi Go heard that, he knelt down on one knee as he bowed his head, while his hand firmly gripped his sword. It was as if he would not miss even a single word.

“H-Hang on!”

“A message from the king must be properly heard.”

“It’s kinda embarrassing though... Anyway...” Yoshu cleared his throat, and then ruminated on the king’s words.

“Temper your sword until the day we meet again! May the fortunes of war be with you!”

Gi Go’s shoulders shook as he held his sword’s hilt seemingly tight enough to break it.

“That’s it... Oh, and by the way, the king told me to go with you.”

The king’s words continued to affect Gi Go for some time.

After a while, he looked up to the starry sky on the night god, then he turned to the village and bowed.

And then... he set off.



Gi Go Amatsuki

Abnormal Status: **Sworn to Spare** added.

Abnormal Status: The effects of the sword god on sanity have worsened.

The title **Subleader** has changed to **Wandering Swordsman**



Chapter 99: Objectives

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	36
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

It’s been two days since Gi Go Amatsuki left the village. The assassin, Gi Ji Arsil, strongly advised to chase after him, but I chose to leave the goblin be and begin our move to the west instead.

We took the carts we recovered from the humans, and disassembled them to create palanquins to be carried by four normal goblins, allowing easier transportation for the pregnant and younger goblins. Our destination was the Fortress of the Abyss.

When the ancient beast tamer, Gi Gi Orudo, and the shaman, Gi Ga Zakuend, saw the carts a heated debate took place.

The topic was: What is this object?

The goblins could not imagine the use of carts to carry goods and commodities, as the forest did not have uniformly level ground. When Gi Gi noted the wheels attached to the carts, he thought them similar to the moons. And so, he concluded: Ah, this must be an idol! An idol made in the image of the

moons!

“But if these are idols, how do the humans use them to worship?” Gi Za asked.

Gi Gi quickly found an answer to Gi Za’s question. He took one of his wild dogs and placed it on the other end of the cart, while he positioned himself next to the other end... And then he jumped on the cart, lifting the dog, sending it flying into the sky.

“Woooooof!?” the dog pitifully cried until it eventually landed on a tree. Upon landing, the branches broke, and it screamed even more, and when it hit the ground, it fainted.

Must’ve been scary.

“This is how they send offerings to the moons!”

He was wrong, but Gi Gi’s short demonstration was able to convince Gi Ji Arsil and Gi Zu Ruo.

In the blink of an eye, the heated debate reached a boiling point. It was then that Shumea happened to be passing by.

“Or you know what! How about we just ask Lord Shumea!” Gi Do said.

The clamoring goblins all looked at each other, and then with a nod, they surrounded the human female. The pressure emanating from the debater goblins caused even the usually cool Shumea to wince.

“Lord Shumea, tell us! What is that thing!? Is it an idol or a moving shield!?” Gi Za asked.

“Umm... It’s a cart used to transport stuff? Is something the matter?”

Contrast the goblins’ zealous questioning, Shumea’s answer was so matter-of-factly that it was like pouring cold water over fire. The goblins went completely silent.

I wasn’t intending to make fun of them, but when I saw Gi Za and Gi Gi unable to look each other in the eye, I broke out laughing.

“K-King... Could it be... You knew?” Gi Za bitterly asked.

“Rather than waste your time on petty things, you should hurry up and prepare,” I said to forcefully steer the topic away.

Well, it’s good to find new things to be interested with.



Along the way I pondered over our future actions.

Our biggest objective currently is to strengthen and expand the horde. I need to amass hordes of goblin warriors in order to take Reshia back with these two hands, then I need to take a country to set a foothold for us in the world of humans.

The question then is how.

The goblin race has great diversity and is the second most populous race after the humans. I checked this with Shumea, and it seems to hold true. Moreover, as far as adventurers and battle slaves are concerned, the goblins are considered to be weak and common, the kind of monster you could see anywhere.

Where there are humans, there are goblins.

If so, then there should be many more hordes of goblins in the forest... Even in the plains where the humans rule, or to the west beyond the Forest of the Abyss, or to the south, past the village, or even to the north, beyond the orc village; where there is land untrodden, unknown goblins may lurk.

Gathering all of these goblins by myself is out of the question. Who knows how long it would take me to accomplish such a feat alone? Hence, I should make use of the more highly evolved goblins among my ranks to bring those goblins to me. If they fail... The female goblins are with me. Even in the worst case, we won’t be wiped out.

In an area two days away from the village, I had Gi Gu Verbena summoned.

“Gi Gu Verbena, you are aware that Gi Go has left the village?”

“...Yes, Your Highness, but I am fully confident that he holds no desire to incite a rebellion.”

“I know. He is not that sort of person,” generously nodded.

Being Gi Go's rival, it seems he understands him quite well.

"I shall send you as my representative."

"Please enlighten me, Your Highness."

"You are to go to the south. There you shall take the local goblins and bring them before me."

I have given the noble goblins the right to have a household. Right now, I am telling him to exercise that right.

Gi Gu Verbena seems to have understood that, as he tightly held the sword sheathed by his waist and bowed his head deeply.

"I will not fail you, my king."

"May the fortunes of war be with you."

"Ha!"

Then he turned around and left with the speed of a beast.

"Because I can't go, right?" Gi Za asked from behind me.

"You and Gi Ga are as stubborn as rocks after all," I sarcastically laughed, at which he too laughed.

The next day I sent Gi Gi Orudo to the north and Gi Zu Ruo to the south-west.

After that we finally arrived at the Fortress of the Abyss.

"Welcome home, Your Majesty!" Kuzan of Gordob said as she prostrated her small, white body before me.

"Did anything happen while I was gone?"

"Nope! I cleaned the place up too."

That's not really it, but alright, it seems nothing is amiss.

"These are the goblins of Eastern Village. Assign them rooms to sleep in."

"Please leave it to me!"

As Kuzan was counting the goblins, she noted the elf, Selena's, presence.

Koro

Toku

"There's actually a small cave dweller in a place like this?" Selena said in

surprise, while Kuzan looked back with confusion.

Sylph

“Koro toku? I am Kuzan of Gordob... You are a wind elf, yes?”

“My apologies, Lord Kuzan,” Gi Za interjected, “I have a prior engagement with this elf. There is still much to learn regarding the elf’s knowledge on magic. If you have business with her, please settle it later.”

Selena immediately hid behind Shumea when Gi Za appeared, while Kuzan ran off to count the rest of the horde.



After word had been sent that the various representatives of the four tribes had all returned safely, a banquet was held. By the time the banquet had ended, Kuzan also finished assigning rooms to the goblins, while the goblins who were seeing the fortress for the first time finally managed to wake themselves up from the surprise.

It was during that time that I called Selena and Shumea over. I only had business with Selena, but I called the both of them since Selena would probably have reservations about coming alone.

“Boss, you needed something?” Shumea asked.

Selena was hiding behind Shumea as always when they entered.

I know I’m scary, but can’t she get over it already?

The image of a certain girl flashed through my mind. It did not take long for her to grow accustomed to me. That didn’t change even when I evolved. For a moment, I felt my chest ache.

No... Don’t think about her.

Shaking those thoughts away, I spoke to my two guests. “Yes, my apologies for calling you at such a time... There’s something I want to know about the elves.”

“Oh, if it’s something like that, then...” Shumea said.

“Right, if it’s something like that, count me in too,” Gi Za suddenly entered the room.

Where the hell did *you* come from? The two girls' looks seemed to say as they watched Gi Za leisurely take a seat beside me.

"Well, go on. Speak!" Gi Za excitedly said like a kid about to go on a trip.

Chuckling, I prompted Shumea and Selena to start.

According to legends of old passed down among the elves of the wind, the sylphs, the gods followed after Deetna to create the various races.

The god of forest, Chenzhen, and the god of water, Iren, created the elves.

The god of wind, Castor, and the god of earth, Nmaro, sculpted the demihumans out of the ores.

The god of illusions, Famil, and the god of dreams, Jeje, weaved dreams and illusions together to create the dragons.

The god of starfaring, Tear, traveled the stars and gathered ingredients to create the giants.

Like that the various races were created.

Shumea and Selena were wide-eyed as I spoke. It seems they didn't expect a goblin like myself to be capable of speaking such things.

"Didn't your mother tell you it's rude to leave your mouth open?"

Selena promptly shut her jaws closed.

"Wow, boss, I really didn't expect a goblin such as yourself to know such things..." Shumea said as she scratched her head, seemingly still shocked.

Well, normally that would be the case.

"Anyway, let's hear it."

Selena turned to Shumea with a troubled look, while the latter patted her on the back while reassuring her that it was alright.

Selena nervously started to talk, and Gi Za and I listened with rapt attention.

The beings known as elves were largely divided into four types. Each type was given a name according to the spirit they were associated with. The fire elves: the salamanders, the water elves: the undines, the earth elves: the gnomes, and

the wind elves: the sylphs. The most influential of the elves were the undines, who worshiped the water goddess, followed by the gnome and sylphs. Last were the salamanders, who were strong individually but few in number.

Selena herself did not know much about the other elves. The sylphs lived with the forest and died with the forest. This has been their way of life since long ago. To play with the wind and die under the blessings of the forest was the greatest happiness any sylph could ask for.

The sylphs either worshiped the god of wind, Castor, or the god of forest, Chenzhen. They were long-lived, but it was at most only twice a human's life. Supposedly, there were those who lived three times as long as humans, but Selena did not know any such sylph.

The sylphs were mostly hunters, but unlike the goblins, they hunted with their bows and offered prayers before eating to purify the meat.

Like joining your hands together to say grace?

The sylphs mostly married among themselves and rarely interfered with the other elves.

I quietly listened while Gi Za would ask questions from time to time.

Selena talked endlessly even as the dawn approached.

TI Note: Aight, I changed everything back to elf. I honestly have no idea whether all these gnome, undine... *etc.* are supposed to be elves, but when I take away my preconceptions about elves, that's what the text seems to say, so let's just go with that.

For a more technical explanation: The author gave 妖精族 (sprite/fairy/elf) the エルフ (Elf) reading, so 妖精族 should be read as elf. 風の妖精族 was given the シルフ (Sylph) reading, but the words that compose it can be read as wind sprite or wind elf. If we just use the given reading for 妖精族, however, it suggests wind elf. When you look at it this way, it seems obvious, but I just really find it hard to reconcile gnomes, undines... *etc.* with elves. Anyway, let's just go with this, as I can't afford to read the whole book right now to figure out if my conjectures are correct.

Chapter 100: A Certain Parting

TI Note: Please check the note at the end in the last chapter. There are no sprites anymore. The four sprites are all elves. There’s a more in-depth explanation at the end of the previous chapter. Also the character underneath the koro toku? was changed to small cave dweller.

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	36
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

“Do you want to go home?” I asked.

Shumea and Gi Za turned to me with reproach in their eyes. In Gi Za’s case, it was probably because he would be troubled by the elf’s absence, while in Shumea’s, it was most likely because she thought I was only teasing her.

“Will you let me go home?” Selena asked with fear.

I nodded. “When the time comes. I need a contact to reach out to the elves after all.”

That wasn’t a lie. The goblins weren’t enough to take over the world. It’s not enough even with Bui’s orcs and Hasu’s kobolds.

To win against the humans, I need to gather the power of many races. The sylph with their masterful archery is one such race. I need them, but there's no need to antagonize them.

Should they get in my way, however, I won't mind forcefully annexing them into my kingdom. Everything will depend on how the sylphs react.

"Goblin boss, you sure are big-hearted," Shumea said.

"Are you sure you haven't simply forgotten your place?" I said back.

Shumea wryly smiled and scratched her head. "Well, if you put it that way..."

"Umm... T-Thank you," Selene sheepishly said.

"It's nothing to be grateful about."

Everything depends on how the sylphs respond. There's no reason to thank me.

After that Selena talked about the particularities of the sylph's lifestyle.

koro

She talked about playing with the small people, about eating the edible plants near her village, and about the other elves her age.

koro

dwarves

The thing that caught my attention the most were the small metal workers. They dug out holes to live in and were skilled in smithing and other industrial arts. The elves often traded elven liquor in exchange for their arrows and knives.

"How many of those koro dwarves are there?"

"Oh, they're everywhere," Selena said with a rare smile.

I inadvertently raised my brows at that. Her smile was beautiful, like the blooming of a flower, but I can't believe she's still answering so vaguely. It's not actually that much of an issue, but it really slows down the conversation. Not to mention, I can't follow up on this right now. If the other sylphs found out that I'm interested, they might use it to their advantage.

I asked a different question.

Apparently, the sylphs prefer to isolate themselves in various forests and

build villages for themselves. They rarely interfered in matters of the world outside. They truly believed that there was no greater happiness than being in the forest.

But there were exceptions, and some of them would choose to live alongside the humans as adventurers.

When the discussion reached this point, Shumea spoke. “I’ve heard of some of those. There’s the King of Bows, Feeney, from the Fairy Blood Oath of the Moon Flower, Clan Five-Bow Shuen from the Holy Shushunu Kingdom to the east, and although not an archer, there’s also the salamander, Barui.”

Sylph happily added. “Feeney and Mr. Shuen are both sylphs. Mr. Barui is probably a salamander. But regardless, they all went out into the world over 30 years ago. They’re amazing people!”

The Five-Bow apparently refers to the top five bow users in the Holy Shushunu Kingdom.

“So, why did you end up a slave then? Weren’t the sylphs supposed to be happy living in the forest?” I asked.

Apparently, it wasn’t a pleasant topic for the sylph, as Selena’s shoulders immediately dropped. Shumea’s glare was pretty painful, but I ignored it and implored Selena to speak.

“...I’ve always looked up to the world outside. In the forest there’s no need to worry about food and other basic needs, but...”

When Selena went silent, Shumea consoled her with a hug.

“...A long time ago, someone told me this, ‘This place has everything... Everything except freedom’. That person left the village, and I never got to meet her again, but it was meeting her that made me want to see the world outside. I couldn’t understand what this ‘freedom’ she kept talking about was, but she dreamed of it. I wanted to understand what that ‘freedom’ she yearned for was, so I left the village.” Shumea said with tears in her eyes.

“And then you got caught by an evil slave trader?” Gi Za said, at which Selena tearfully nodded.

“Freedom, huh. Well... It’s good to be able to do as you please.” The former slave, Shumea, wryly smiled as she rubbed the back of her neck where her collar used to be. All her life she’s been thrown around by others. Who knows how mentally painful it is to realize not even your own life belongs to you.

My Defiant Soul ached within me. How many have been tortured with that pain? It doesn’t matter whether it’s the gods or the powerful humans. Such an act is unforgivable.

“I see... So that’s how you ended up a slave.”

“Cheer up, alright? If I ever meet that person, I’ll tell her you’re doing well. So, what’s her name?”

Symphoria

“Thank you... That person’s name is... Pale. Pale Tranquil Forest.”



The main street, where the mainstream stores were lined up, was hustling and bustling as always. In the alley, a short walk away from the main street, was the corner taken up by the slave traders.

Today, one of the imperial guards, Yuza, was out on a patrol with the lowborn soldiers.

“Damn it!”

Lately, his temper had been getting worse to the point that it seemed to be boiling over almost everyday. The increase in adventurers had led to an increase in disputes and fighting, but his superior, the commander of the imperial guards, was an unreliable sham who couldn’t do anything past flatter the government officials.

The increase in adventurers wasn’t all a bad thing, however, as their expansion would mean less monsters in the forest.

—There are too many muscle-brained thugs! What a waste! If you have the strength to make trouble, use it in the forest!

Yuza spat curses in his mind as he quickened his pace. He ran past the main street into the alley.

“Why are adventurers such a pain!? And why do they always cause trouble along my route!?””

The moment Yuza entered the alley, where barely anyone could hear him, he opened the lid on his seething rage, and started cursing out loud. His subordinates seemed used to his antics already, as they only looked at each other and wryly smiled.

“Because of you I had to give up my day off! Because of you my beloved Shifa was saddened! She even started to grumble saying, ‘Work Again?’ All because of you!”

Yuza’s serious vice-captain did not bother interacting with him as he went on his rampage.

Speaking of which, Shifa was referring to Yuza’s only four-year-old daughter. Yuza’s vice-captain had already grown calluses on his ear listening to Yuza’s complaints whenever they went out to drink. When he thought of Yuza’s daughter, he thought of how adorable the little girl was.

“We should quickly wrap this up then. Your adorable Shifa is waiting for you after all,” Yuza’s vice-captain said.

“Bastard, are you aiming for my daughter! I’m not giving her to you! I absolutely won’t! ...Damn it, I can’t believe the other guards actually think the adventurers are too hard to handle!”

Naturally, Yuza’s vice-captain couldn’t actually hate or like a four-year-old kid.

Except for Yuza’s complaints and needless affection over his daughter, he was actually a pretty good boss.

He had a strong sense of righteousness, he didn’t accept bribes, and he always stood in front of the lowborn soldiers when entering a scene.

All humans had faults. Yuza’s vice-captain wryly smiled as he thought that, then he turned his focus back to his boss.

“The disturbance is up ahead,” Yuza’s vice-captain said.

“Good! Let’s get this over with quickly. You have permission to use your sword depending on the situation, so go ahead and unfasten those clasps now.”

The soldiers looked at each other. The use of swords was strictly regulated. Misuse would be met with a heavy punishment.

The fact that they were given permission to use their swords meant that the situation was that dangerous. Still... it was best to be cautious.

“Is that alright?”

“Think ahead. Even the onlookers are probably equipped! But, listen! Although I told you to ready yourselves, you are absolutely not to unsheathe your weapons until I give the signal to!”

Although the man grumbled a lot, there was no doubting his skill. Inadvertently, Yuza’s vice-captain gripped his club tight.

“Your response!?”

“Ha! All men, ready your weapons!”

At the vice-captain’s command, all the guards unfastened the clasp on their weapons.

“Imperial Guards! Clear the area!” Yuza said.

The onlookers all winced when he said that.

The alley was a place that attracted the sort of people who would handle slaves. The people whose legs were wounded here was not limited to just one or two.

Yuza and his men passed through the alley and entered a certain slave shop.



Some time earlier inside the same slave shop.

The slave trader had a complacent smile plastered on his face as he eyed the customer. His long years as a slave trader had given him a kind of skill that allowed him to see the value of his customers. The customer today was a big one.

From what he’s gathered, the people before him were members of a famous clan.

“Dear customers from Soar to Freedom, is there anything that’s caught your fancy?”

The slave trader couldn’t be happier. Rich customers have been visiting him one after another. Just a few days ago, that holy knight, Gene, paid big bucks for three slaves. And today, he was going to strike it rich again. He was the luckiest man in the world, he thought. The joy filling him made him unable to contain his laughter.

“Are your human slaves all like these?”

As the customers were a clan from the distant east, there was no way they would know of the market price. It shouldn’t matter even if he overcharged them a bit, the slave trader thought as he flicked his abacus.

—Do they prefer demihumans?

The slave trader nodded. “The castle has been pressuring us a lot lately.”

Slaves usually came either as a result of battle or as a means to pay one’s debt. The better the quality, the more expensive the slaves were. Of course, there were also slaves who became slaves as punishment for their crimes.

The slave trader’s tongue fluently moved as he negotiated.

“...I’m looking for an elven girl. Her name is Selena,” said a beautiful elf who stepped out from the crowd of adventurers.

Her bountiful golden hair gathered into a single stream behind her, and on her back could be seen a bow that had been clearly used for a long time. Her pair of emerald eyes were filled with much sorrow even as she spoke. This elf was indeed none other than Pale Symphoria.

Although the slave trader had handled many elves before, the elf before him was so beautiful he actually gasped.

“Oi, you gonna talk or what? The princess is asking,” a scoundrel-looking man said from the side.

The slave trader was so enchanted that it wasn’t until the scoundrel-looking man had taken him by the collar that he finally awoke.

“T... There’s no elf here by that name.”

The moment the slave trader said that, the scoundrel-looking man hit him.

“Ryutanu, there’s no need to be so rough,” Pale said.

“Don’t worry. I know what I’m doing,” Ryutanu gently laughed, then he turned his gaze to the slave trader.

His sharp gaze weighed heavily on the poor slave trader.

“Leader, I’m gonna have a man-to-man talk with this guy, so... Can you give us some space?”

The young man Ryutanu referred to as ‘leader’ heaved a sigh, and then he left through the back with Pale.

“Leader, Mr. Ryutanu...”

“Think about how he feels too... Besides, weren’t you intending to leave the clan?”

Pale tried to argue, but the man called leader shut her down.

“That guy feels indebted to you, so...”

It was almost time for the seasons to change in the capital. The rainy clouds that appeared to block the sun were proof of that.

“But...” Pale tried to argue when Ryutanu came out.

“Leader,” he said, stopping Pale from saying anything further, “it seems she was sold to the holy knight called Gene.”

When the young man called ‘leader’ heard that, he frowned.

“Gene... That’s the guy who died in the forest, right?”

“...So she’s missing,” Pale muttered. Gradually, panic began to appear on her face.

“Princess, this...”

“Pale.”

The leader and Ryutanu looked at each other.

"I... I think I'll go back to the forest... to my hometown," Pale said.

"...That would be best," the leader said, at which Ryutanu nodded.

They could come with her too if they so wished, but doing so would mean abandoning everything they've built up in the east. They would have to start again here in the west. They understood this, but after having been together for so long, watching the elf leave made the clan feel so much smaller.

"Princess, thank you for everything."

Ryutanu bowed to the elf, and then quickly ran back to the store.

"A farewell gift," Pale said.

The bag she handed over was clearly full of gold coins.

"I don't need this," the leader said, "it was thanks to you that our clan grew from that tiny group to become something everyone in the east knew. We were just a group of thugs, but just as the name of our clan says, we were able to free ourselves to reach a land unknown, becoming pioneers. We couldn't be here today if it weren't for you."

Ah, so these are parting words, Pale thought as she looked down.

"The truth is we should be the ones helping you. We should be coming here with you to help reclaim the forest, but..."

"The issue with the red king can't be avoided... I know."

A battle between clans to be first. Pale's absence would greatly hurt their clan, but they still sent her off without any malice. For that she was grateful.

"You have money now, so at least you won't end up like you did before," the leader said.

The man chuckled at that, and she too laughed. When she first left the forest, she got lost in the crowd of humans, and she ended up in the alley with a group of scoundrels. The ones who saved her then were the members of Elks.

From then on they gradually gathered members to turn that small clan into the clan it was today. Memories flashed before them as they said their farewells. There were times when it was painful, and times when it was sad, but

in the end, it was a happy memory.

“Goodbye, Pale Symphoria of the Quiet Moon.”

“Farewell, “First Wing”, Touri Nokia.”

The two bumped their fists and then parted.

The leader, Touri, expelled all thoughts of the girl disappearing into the crowd of people, then he went back to the store. Ryutanu was currently being questioned by the imperial guards.

“Damn it... I guess we’ll be eating behind bars for a while.”

But if it meant ridding himself of the sorrow lurking in his heart, he might as well go wild.

Chapter 101: Two Homesick Goblins

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	36
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

Humans tended to work in the morning; that was the natural order for them. But for goblins, there was no such thing. Their eyes worked well whether it was night or day, the druids’ magic was at its full strength during the hour of the night god, and yet the goblins were neither nocturnal nor diurnal.

What was the job of the king?

The goblin lifestyle meant there was no given time for their activities. They moved about without regard for the sun or the twin moons. Because of that food was extremely important.

In the western part of the Forest of Darkness were the villages of the goblin tribes. If these villages were to fall, everything would be for naught, so it could be said that these villages were the most important part of my plans for expansion. Because of that I decided to note the villages’ location as the point from which we would be expanding to all directions.

To the east were the Gi Village and the humans. To the west were untrodden

lands. To the north, beyond the kobold village, were lands unknown, and to the south were the vast plains and the Paradua village. The area around us is mostly unexplored except for those parts under the control of the tribes.

The goblins were not capable of making maps. Just in case, I asked Shumea, and it seems she too did not have such an ability.

Shouldn't have gotten my hopes up, I thought. Seriously, why am I surrounded by muscle-brains everywhere.

It was necessary to go to the actual place to understand the area. Images or symbols could be used to draw the map, even stones would work, it didn't really matter. Like that I left the fortress to explore the surrounding area.

I took some of the goblins along so we can hunt along the way, while I left the knight-class goblin, Gi Ga, to defend the fortress.

We had normal goblins with us, so I had goblins with high leadership skills like Gi Jii lead the exploration groups.

As one might expect, the bigger prey really stood out, like the deer called big horn, or the long-legged spiders known as Annie Spider, or the big caterpillars referred to as Green Caterpillar. They were virtually limitless. Their bodies were big and it took some time to take them down, but it wasn't an impossible task.

Once we learned the traits of the monsters, we'll be able to use traps during hunts.

After we hunted enough, I climbed up a tree to get a good view of the surrounding area.

How level was the ground? Was there water nearby? Where were the plains? Where would be the best place to attack the humans? Where would traps be most unlikely to hurt our allies?

Trees covered the land, but by looking down from a higher point it was possible to understand the terrain. It was hard work, and the goblins following me could not understand the meaning behind such careful study of the terrain. Even the most evolved of them, Gi Jii, a rare class goblin, could not fathom my actions.

When the sun was about to set, I concluded our exploration, and went back to the fortress, where we ate our spoils. I listened to the old goblin's report regarding the newly born goblins as I ate.

"More and more females are being born ever since coming here," the old goblin said.

That was something to celebrate. The more females there were, the more goblins there would be in time. According to the old goblin, previously, only 1 out of 10 would be born female, but ever since coming here, females were being born twice as fast.

Was this also because of the fortress?

I don't know whether this is a result of the twin-headed snake's blessing, but it's a good thing. There are 340 days left until the battle with the humans.

Until then just how much more could we increase our numbers? That was not a problem only for the females but also for our food supply.



"I have returned," Gilmi announced.

It wasn't until two days after the king returned to the fortress that Gilmi managed to make his way back to the Unknown Forest, where the village of Ganra was.

"I've been waiting," Princess Narsa said, "welcome home."

Gilmi showed a look of relief when he heard Princess Narsa's voice.

"Uh huh."

"Good grief, the young ones sure like to make their elders wait."

When he heard Rashka and Aluhaliha's voice next, he frowned.

"I've returned, chief. It is good to see you well. Unfortunate, however, that these two seem to be doing well too."

Although Gilmi was knelt before Narsa, the words that came out of his lips made her face stiffen for a moment.

"Hmph, good guts."

“Gotten quite daring, haven’t we?”

Aluhaliha and Rashka both wryly smiled.

The long struggle between them has made it difficult for them to act cordially. They could not honestly express their happiness for each other’s well being. Well, Narsa thought, it should be fine as long as they work on that from here on.

“So, why have the two of you come?” Gilmi asked as he stood beside Narsa.

“Right, I’ll get straight to the point,” Rashka said, “what do you think the king is planning?”

The frankness of that question caused Aluhaliha to lightly click his tongue, while Gilmi ended up raising his brows.

“What do you mean by that?” Gilmi asked.

“Continuing the battle any further would have been difficult. That I understand, but what about after? Lord Gi Go has left, and many more have been sent to distant lands.” It was the experienced Aluhaliha who spoke this time.

Although Hal was the current chieftain of Paradua, he still gave a report to Aluhaliha, and Aluhaliha could not understand the king’s intentions.

The reason they had gathered here today was to understand the king’s intentions. They thought it would be best to hear Gilmi’s thoughts, as he was the closest to the king.

“Is there a problem?” Gilmi asked.

“There is,” Rashka said, “sometimes the king would do things I cannot comprehend, but is that really all there is?”

“To comprehend the king’s objectives and work to realize them is the making of a true retainer,” he continued.

Gilmi was shocked. This proud goblin was actually saying he would work for the king.

“I need the king in good health until the day of our rematch. Otherwise, there

would be no meaning in challenging him,” Rashka said with a huge smile.

For some reason, those words allowed Gilmi to come to terms with the proud goblin working for the king.

When he looked at Narsa, their eyes met.

“...The king wishes to find new subordinates. Lord Gi Gu and the others have been sent to look for such people.”

Rashka was puzzled when he heard those words.

“Does that mean he doesn’t trust us?” Aluhaliha asked.

Gilmi shook his head. “No, rather, it seems he’s preparing for the next war. The next war will probably be with the humans again.”

“Those humans were certainly strong,” Rashka said.

Aluhaliha became thoughtful, then bitterly said. “That kid Hal came back wounded too. It wasn’t a bad thing since it seems to have made him manlier, but... I see, so it was a difficult battle, huh.”

Gilmi spoke. “Are you not satisfied even with Paradua’s name being glorified?”

“There’s no point if we’re no use to the king,” Aluhaliha curtly said.

“The king was happy though.”

“Hmm, that’s good, I suppose.”

The topic digressed a bit, so Narsa brought it back on course. “It seems the king wishes for a stronger army. Can we be certain he doesn’t think we’re unneeded?”

“Of course, after all the expansion of the army will serve as a foundation for our country,” Gilmi said.

“I see,” Narsa nodded.

Narsa, Rashka, and Aluhaliha all pondered on the matter on their own, then Rashka stood up.

“Gaidga will give birth to many children.”

It was the chief of Gaidga, Rashka's, simple conclusion.

"Ever since the ogres disappeared, the miasma leaking from the Forest of the Abyss has lessened. As a result, beasts to prey upon have returned, and our rider-beasts have ceased starving. We owe much to the king. Therefore, Paradua shall thoroughly temper all of its warriors so that they all grow to become great warriors." Aluhaliha smiled like the devil as he thought of the grueling training he would put the Paradua through.

"Ganra... shall work on its skills," Narsa said.

Aluhaliha and Rashka turned to Narsa with admiration.

"We neither have a strong body like the Gaidga nor mobility like those of Paradua with their rider-beasts. What we do have is the skill to work with stones and carve out things from trees. The skill to craft things. Therefore, we shall work to create new weapons and armor for those who have yet to be born. Our craft shall be their strength."

"And I thought you were just a lass, not bad," Aluhaliha chuckled.

Rashka on the other hand was shocked. "Indeed, if it's Ganra, it should be possible. No, it's possible precisely because it's Ganra."

Like this the tribes decided how they would support the king on his path to world domination.

After the two chieftains left, Gilmi and Narsa went to see the large tree where they frequently played as children.

"Your answer just now... about how Ganra was to move was spectacular, chief," Gilmi said.

"I had a lot of time to think on it. I watched the Ganra, the Gaidga, the Paradua, and even the Gi Village... I guess you could say I learned a lot," Narsa said.

"You've grown up to be a splendid chief. I guess I won't be calling you a little girl again."

"Oh, you. Stop it, it's embarrassing... By the way, I heard the king gave you a last name."

“Yes... With it the relationship between Ganra and the Gi Village will become even stronger.”

“In other words, the Ganra tribe is safer than ever... Hey, Gilmi, are you sure you’re not pushing yourself?”

“I’m sure there’s no such...”

But there was a sadness to his gaze as he knelt on the ground. Narsa saw that despite the dark of the night.

“Ra Gilmi Fishiga... huh. You’re amazing, you know. You’ve been moving further and further, all on your own. No one from the four tribes can even look down on you anymore. Everyone looks up to you now... as the First Archer, as my father’s successor, as someone who brought together the tribes...”

Gadieta

“It’s still not enough to repay Master Gilan.”

“I feel like you’ve gotten somewhere far away... somewhere where I can’t reach you anymore. Gilmi... don’t push yourself too much. Without you, I...”

Narsa didn’t say the end of that sentence, and neither did Gilmi ask. The two goblins stood there under the large tree as they reminisced on their childhood days.



In the outskirts of the vast capital.

Today, Reshia had received permission and gone into town with Lili. She wore a hood over her face, making it impossible to tell that it was the holy saint herself who was walking out in the streets. With the adventurer, Lili, by her side, at most, passersby would simply take her for the young lady of a merchant family.

They bought bags of sweets from the food stalls along the crowded street. They each carried half of the luggage, though Lili argued she should carry everything. Unfortunately, doing so would garner them the wrong kind of attention, so Lili had no choice but to acquiesce. The place they were headed to was the slums, a district where the poor lived. In a place like that where the public order was poor, Reshia had more say than Lili.

Once there, they headed for the orphanage that took in abandoned children. When they opened the door of the already crumbling orphanage, a wooden rod came swinging at them, but they easily dodged it, and the kid that swung it tripped on himself.

“Your manners sure have gotten worse, Fishmo,” Reshia said.

“Ah, it’s Reshia!” The young boy said in a loud voice, causing the rest of the children to come out.

“Reshia! It’s Reshia!”

Reshia embraced the children that came out, handing the bags of sweets to Fishmo.

“Are you going to marry that guy called Gulland?” Fishmo asked.

“Of course not,” Reshia said.

“You sure have gotten famous. People are calling you a saint now.”

“Yeah... They do call me that, but...”

Reshia patted the children one after another as she sat on a chair. She cuddled with the children like that and told them a story. Unlike her usually strained face, she had a gentle expression about her as she told the happy story of a god who fell in love with a human.

The children listened happily to the story that could distract them from the bitter reality. By the time the story ended, it was already dark out. Reshia and Lili bid their goodbyes as they left the orphanage.

“Do you always do this sort of stuff?” Lili asked.

“I’m not a politician, so I can’t actually save them. But I think it’s too cruel to just watch them rot like that without doing anything.”

The words of this girl who had not even reached adulthood made Lili bite her lips. A few days ago, the king had asked her a question. He asked, ‘Do you have any intentions of becoming a real knight?’

The allure of that proposal greatly shook her heart. She had always dreamt of one day being a knight. It was a dream she held even in her childhood when her

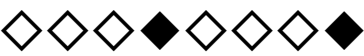
father told her tales of heroes and valiant warriors. But being a woman greatly disadvantaged her, making her dream remain only a dream. Because of that there were many times where she wished she had been born a man instead.

But that very dream was at the tip of her fingertips now.

Worry tugged on her heart, but when she saw what Reshia did today, all of the sudden, it felt like her worries were so small.

She had to make a decision.

For a moment, the sword sheathed by her waist rung.



Level has risen.

36 -> 37



Intermission: Wolf Pack

TI Note: Please check the note at the end in the last chapter. There are no sprites anymore. The four sprites are all elves. There’s a more in-depth explanation at the end of the previous chapter. Also the character underneath the koro toku? was changed to small cave dweller.

Status	
Name	Gi Gu Verbena
Race	Goblin
Level	75
Class	Noble; Subleader
Possessed	Overpowering Howl; Sword Mastery C+; The King's Right-Hand Man;
Skills	Cooperation; Throw Projectile; Versatile Master; Farseeing Eye

Gi Gi traveled deep into the south at the king’s orders, hunting beasts along the way as he looked for goblins he could take as subordinates. If he could bring young goblins before the king, the king would surely be elated.

There was also a special meaning behind being allowed to have his own subordinates. Gi Gu figured it was proof that the king trusted him. He even anticipated that the king might allow him to lead his own army in the coming war with the humans. Because of that Gi Gu was particularly eager to complete this mission.

But...

“There’s no one,” Gi Gu said to himself as he eyed his surroundings.

There was still much water left in his water bag, and he had no trouble feeding himself, but with seemingly no end to this trip in sight, it seemed wiser to stock up now rather than later.

When he came to that conclusion, he sharpened his ears to search for water, then he made his way toward the sound.

“Mu.”

“Gi!?”

Along the way he came across what seemed to be a goblin, but he looked odd. A birth defect, perhaps? The goblin’s arms were relatively long compared to his small body. His legs were also short. He was much shorter than Gi Gu, who was a noble class, and was probably lacking even when compared to a normal class.

“Gi Ga’s relative? A child?”

Puzzled, Gi Gu tilted his head, and so did the weird goblin in front of him.

“Well, it doesn’t really matter.”

As he thought that Gi Gu took a step, but that seemed to have frightened the goblin, as the goblin went running away.

“Hrm.”

Gi Gu thought the odd goblin might lead him to his village if he followed, so he followed.

“Gi, Gu, Gigi!?”

The goblin couldn’t talk, but he seemed to be cursing at him. Then all of the

sudden, Gi Gu felt something coming from above.

“Nu!?”

Gi Gu Immediately jumped back. Just as expected, it was another goblin with a long arm that landed in front of him. This time there were two.

“Gi Gi—,” one of them said.

“Prey,” said another another.

Gi Gu smiled upon seeing the sharpened wood of a spear in the goblins’ hands.

“That’s not too bad.”

When the goblins before him saw him smile, they unconsciously stepped back. Gi Gu himself did not notice it, but as a noble class who had fought powerful enemies one after another, he had unconsciously picked up a habit of smiling fiercely during battles. To him there was be nothing odd about the way he smiled, but to the goblins watching him, that smile was the terrifying smile of a goblin; one that was fiercer than any other’s.

The goblins before him looked at each other. The moment Gi Gu took a step forward, they made a run for it.

“Mumu.”

Should he use the Overpowering Howl he learned from the king here? He was done in pretty badly by that skill last time.

Despite being in battle, Gi Gu had enough leisure that he could afford to reminisce.

But the goblins were much faster than he thought, and in the blink of an eye, they had disappeared from sight.

“Whoops.”

It would have been a disaster if he lost track of them, so he quickly followed. When he caught up, the three goblins were standing up ahead, and between them and him was a shoddily made trap, covered only by some branches. Gi Gu stared at the three goblins, and they stared back at him in turn.

They seemed happy at their work.

“Mu...”

But as Gi Gu thought of the trap and the three goblins, gradually, anger filled him.

They actually thought he would fall into a trap like this! Not to mention something this shoddily made!

“You fools!!” Gi Gu yelled as he invoked his Overpowering Howl, causing the three goblins to cower.

When he kicked at the trap and scattered the branches that covered it, the smallest of the three goblins began to cry.

When he put his arm inside the tiny hole, it expanded because of how small it was, leaving the fattest of the three goblins perplexed.

When he started throwing away the thorns littered inside the hole, the tallest of the three goblins prostrated himself on the ground in despair.

“Listen well, fools! Traps are weapons meant to help us survive! It is a skill! And above all else, it is an art! Setting a shoddily made trap like this is an insult to me, Gi Gu!”

Gi Gu used the axe in his hand to cut several branches, sharpening one end to fashion them into spears. He used one of those spears to make the hole wider, then he filled the hole with those spears, sticking them into the bottom of the hole to make a bed of spears. Finally, he took thick branches, put them together atop the hole. Above those he added thin branches, added some leaves, and then covered everything with dirt.

With that the trap was perfectly concealed, but he wasn't done yet!

On top of that already perfectly set trap, he even added some grass, making the perfect trap even more perfect.

“Behold, this is a trap!” Gi Gu proudly declared.

The three goblins looked at each other as they compared Gi Gu's trap with theirs. The smallest of them walked up the trap to check Gi Gu's work. When the other two followed, the three goblins started discussing among themselves.

When they reached a conclusion, the three goblins prostrated themselves before Gi Gu.

“Ki-ng!”

“Huh?”

“King!”

“I am king?”

“King!”

Erm... King is no good, Gi Gu thought. There is already a king.

“Don’t call me king.”

The three goblins started talking among themselves again.

“What do you call yourselves?” Gi Gu asked.

The three goblins glanced at each other, then Gi Gu started pointed at them one after another.

At the smallest one of the lot. “Midget.”

At the fattest one of the lot. “Fatty”

At the biggest one of the lot. “Blockhead.”

“Let’s change those names. From hence forth, I shall bestow upon you new names. Call yourselves these.”

The three goblins’ eyes sparkled.

Gi Gu named them in order. First was the smallest of the lot and the one with the longest arms.

“Gu Long.”

The other two goblins worded their admiration as they enviously looked at the small goblin.

The next one was the fattest of the lot.

“Gu Tough.”

Again voices of admiration rose.

The last one was the biggest of the lot.

“Gu Big.”

Again voices of admiration rose.

All that was left now was to decide how they should refer to him.

“From now on call me Elder Brother.” Gi Gu said.

“Elder Brother!” The three goblins said.

Good, Gi Gu nodded.

“Now I want you to bring me to your village.”

Gi Gu was elated. With this he would be able to complete his mission. But for some reason, the three goblins’ countenance paled.

“Village, driven out.” Gu Big said as he sank to the floor.

Gi Gu was puzzled.

“King, angry!” Tough said as he quivered.

“We, ran!” Long sorrowfully said.

Gi Gu didn’t really understand, but there was one thing he couldn’t let pass.

“King, you say?” Gi Gu’s eyes widened so much they seemed to make a sound. The three goblins shook. Gi Gu’s voice was angry, so angry it seemed like his kind behavior until now was all but a lie.

“There is only one king, my king!”

Gi Gu’s hold on his sword grew tighter as his breath grew ragged.

“Lead the way to your village. The false king shall be purged!”

Excited, the three goblins led Gi Gu away from the lake. They took down the beasts along the way under Gi Gu’s leadership, who made them work together as a three-man cell. They could not believe how effective their attacks were against the powerful beasts that lurked the forest. It was such that the three of them actually held each other and cried tears of joy.

After Gi Gu filled his belly with the meat of a beast he’d never seen before, he looked around him. The trees in this area were all tall, but there was a lot more

room to go through between the trees. More of the sun's rays passed through too, making the place much more brighter than normal. The place didn't suit the name 'Forest of Darkness' very well, but judging from the direction from which the sun rose, Gi Gu was sure this was still the same forest.

"Is the forest still far?" Gi Gu asked.

"Close!" Replied one goblin.

"Very!" Replied two others at the same time.

Gi Gu and his three new subordinates walked a bit after their meal, then the three goblins urged him to look up.

"The lookout, Wail."

It seems the lookout was up in the trees, Gi Gu thought as he looked up. When he did, a goblin jumped down. As expected, it had long arms and wielded a rusted short sword.

"Not too shabby." Gi Gu fiercely smiled.

The goblin ran up to him swinging its sword, but with a single blow from his axe, Gi Gu cut the goblin in half, bone and flesh altogether, letting spurt blue blood as the goblin fell to the ground.

"Elder brother!"

In the blink of an eye, Gi Gu and his three subordinates had found themselves surrounded from all directions. The three goblins quickly took formation, their backs against each other, ready to fend off the enemy. But though the situation seemed grim, Gi Gu kept smiling.

"As long as you fight according to my instructions, you'll be able to win," Gi Gu said.

In response, Tough beat his stomach, Big beat his chest, and Long beat the ground. The three goblins responded in their own way to show they would do as Gi Gu said.

"I am Gi Gu Verbena," Gi Gu announced to the surrounding goblins, "I have come to these lands at the orders of the goblin king. You shall become my subordinates and swear fealty to the king! Should you refuse your lives shall be

considered worthless!”

With his axe, Gi Gu knocked down a goblin that approached him while in the middle of his speech. Another goblin came after, and this time he used his long sword to skewer him before throwing away his dead body.

“GURuuRUGAGAAAAa!” Gi Gu bellowed out his Overpowering Howl.

As the shorter goblins cowered, Gi Gu gave out his orders to Long, Big, and Tough.

“Long, aim for the legs. Big, Tough, follow!”

Long, who was standing left of Gi Gu, used his long arms to strike the legs of the goblin before him. The weapon he used was the spear Gi Gu had given to him. It was a simple spear made from sharpening the end of a piece of a wood, but it was as long as Long himself.

The enemy goblin tried his best to defend against Long’s exceedingly long range.

“Go, Tough.”

But Tough came attacking from Gi Gu’s right side. He was using the same wooden spear though it was much shorter than Long’s. He easily swung that short spear against the enemy goblin.

As the enemy goblin cried out in pain, Big used his short sword to finish him off.

“Gi, Gi!?”

The coordination of the three goblin was so good that the surrounding goblins were all shocked.

“Run!” Gi Gu ordered, and the three goblins naturally followed.

As Gi Gu took down another enemy, Long kept the approaching goblins in check. As Gi Gu spectacularly led the three goblins, they kicked about the shocked goblins and ran into the village.

“GURu, Gi!?”

When Gi Gu spotted a goblin with red skin and long arms, he smiled.

“You must be the impostor.”

The long sword in his hand was dripping with blood, so he swung it once to clean it, then he made his way for the rare-class goblin.

“GURUGAAaa!” The rare-class angrily howled.

The goblins of the south became excited.

“Who are you!? What business do you have with me!?”

The three goblins following Gi Gu cowered for a moment, but Gi Gu calmly struck his axe into the ground and bellowed out his Overpowering Howl.

Silence filled the area. The power behind Gi Gu’s howl had overawed the goblins. The rare-class was no exception.

“..How many goblins you lead or which goblins you try to chase away is no business of mine. But naming yourself king is unforgivable. If I were to let you go here, my fealty to the king would be called into question.”

“What are you talking about!?” The rare-class said as he slammed his long arms on the ground and bellowed out a howl.

The master of the southern goblins was clearly enraged.

“There is only one goblin fit for the name king... And that is my master! You shall pay for this sacrilege with your life!”

Gi Gu held the long sword with both of his hands, and then he kicked off against the ground with the speed of a noble-class. Gi Gu moved so quickly that the rare-class could not react.

In one stroke, the rare-class’ head had been cut off from his neck. Blood spurted from the opened neck as the goblin’s corpse fell to the ground, and the surrounding goblins went into an uproar. But Gi Gu would not allow it to continue.

Gi Gu bellowed out. “From this day forth, this horde shall be under my name, Gi Gu Verbena!”

At the cry of triumph, the goblins of the south prostrated themselves.



Gi Gu Verbena’s level has risen.

75 -> 1

Because the level has gone past the limit, class will now promote.

Status

Name	Gi Gu Verbena
Race	Goblin
Level	1
Class	Duke; Subleader
Possessed	Overpowering Howl; Sword Mastery B-; The King's Right-Hand Man; Wolf Pack;
Skills	Throw Projectile; Versatile Master; Farseeing Eye; Ruler of the South

Overpowering Howl

Puts pressure on targets with a lower class than one’s own.

Swordsmanship B—

Increases one’s skill with the sword.

The King’s Right-Hand Man

When fighting near the leader of the horde, your abilities will increase.

Wolf Pack

- 1. Direct subordinates of the same race will have their abilities bolstered.
- 2. Direct subordinates with low level or class will be protected against mental attacks.
- 3. Leadership increased.

Throw Projectile

Increases one’s ability to throw.

Versatile Master

Skill with all sorts of melee weapons will be increased up to C+.

Farseeing Eye

The success rate of reconnaissance is increased. The success rate of tracking is increased.

Ruler of the South

Charm effect on the goblins of the south.

Intermission: Gastra’s Adventures

TI Note: Please check the note at the end in the last chapter. There are no sprites anymore. The four sprites are all elves. There’s a more in-depth explanation at the end of the previous chapter. Also the character underneath the koro toku? was changed to small cave dweller.

	Status
Name	<div>Gastra</div> Sovereign of the Wind's Howls
Race	Gray Wolf
Level	20
Class	Baby
Possessed Skills	Wind Slash; Charge
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None

My name is Gastra.

I’m happy because mommy is always taking care of me. Whenever I wagged my tail and called out, mommy would immediately come to pick me up and cuddle.

“GAUuuGAUuu!”

Mommy, mommy!

“Yes, I’m coming. Good grief, you’re such a spoiled pup.”

Mommy is kind. She would embrace me into her chest just like this. Her sky-colored hair prickles when my tail hits it, but I can’t stop wagging my tail.

I’m just that happy.

It’s been lonely lately ever since dad stopped showing up, but...

I like mom the best. Mostly because dad is black and rugged, and he never hugs me. Of course, I love dad too. He would always defeat his enemies with his giant horn and give me food.

I have to become like dad one day.

I haven't seen Cynthia in a while. It's a bit worrying.

"Kuu Kuun."

Mommy, where is Cynthia? I asked, but mom just kept patting me until I forgot my worries.

She probably went with dad somewhere.

Oh, I know! They're probably out on a secret training!

Hmph! She must be planning on growing ahead of me, and then gloating over her newfound strength as she wags her tail!

I have to do something!

"Ah!"

"GAUGAUuu!"

Mom, I'm going out to train!



Lately, my surroundings have changed from trees to stones. There were a lot of people like mommy, but they weren't kind like her. There were even some who tried to hit me with a long rod.

I have to teach people like those the pecking order around here.

The strongest is dad, of course, then mom, and then me, and lastly, Cynthia.

Cynthia is training by herself though, so she probably intends to overtake me.

I went to teach those guys who tried to hit me a lesson. There were more of them than the nails on one of my paws. That means they should be my subordinates!

But even though subordinates are supposed to listen, they ran as soon as they saw me. I'm sure it must be because I'm scary!

Cynthia's scary too when she gets mad.

Enough to make me take a step back, that's why I try not to get mad.

"Kuun, GURUuu"

I won't do anything. Come here!

I tried calling to one of my subordinates, but he just let out a weird voice and ran away.

Mumumu... That's odd.

Welp, that's that. Now, what should I do... I know! Training!

If I'm always here in this stony place, Cynthia will probably leave me in the dust. What to do... Well, for the meantime, how about making lots of subordinates?

The two-legs aren't very reliable though. Four-legs are better.

There doesn't seem to be any around in this stony place though.

Hmm... I'll try going out!

“*Huff Huff!”

I went around to see if there was a hole somewhere, and... I found one.

I forcefully stuck my head in, and kicked off against the ground with my back legs.

When my head was halfway through, I saw the scenery outside. There was a lot of people.

“GURUuu.”

I kicked off against the ground with my back legs several times to break through.

When I thought I'd finally broken through, a four-legged something suddenly approached, stirring up clouds of dust in its path.

I somehow managed to run away into a narrow space. Not even I could take something that big on. Dad might have managed though.

I continued to walk in that dark and narrow space for awhile until I saw a four-legged furball walking.

“Nyaa!”

Its fur stood up! Is it threatening me!?

“GURUuRUuu!”

Well, I’m not about to lose. Growling is my specialty. I’ve always been watching Cynthia do it. I’m sure I can do the same thing!

“Nyaa!?”

The furball was scared when I approached it, and it came running away.

Mumu, not good!

“GAUu!”

I pushed the furball that tried to run away from behind and pinned it down.

“Nya, Nya nyaa!?”

The furball tried to resist, but I pinned it down with two more of my legs. Eventually, the furball stopped struggling.

“GUu, GAUu!”

When it calmed down, I lightly bit it by its ears to ensure that it would be my subordinate after I released it.

“Nyaa!?”

The furball jumped out when I did, and then it started sniffing me. Even though it was trying to run away just a little while ago, suddenly, it was even rubbing its body on mine. I traced my paws on its slender tail that was standing.

The nose of the furball was warm as it kept sniffing me from the side.

“GAU, GAU!”

Alright, I made a subordinate! I should report to mom!

I took the puzzled furball with me to see mom.



“GAUu, GAUu!”

Mom! Mom!

“Oh, are you back, Gastra?”

“Sigh... It brought something weird back...”

I approached mom as she was walking toward that thing called a table and introduced subordinate no. 1.

Mom's subordinate looked suspiciously at my subordinate.

"GAUu, GAUuuu!"

Aren't I amazing!? I made my first subordinate!

As I wagged my tail, subordinate no. 1 rubbed me from my side.

"...Lady Reshia."

"You know, Gastra."

Praise me! Praise me!

Mom picked me up as usual when I rubbed myself on her feet. But just when I thought she would embrace me into her warm chest as usual, mom frowned as she held me up.

Huh?

"Gastra, you're a wolf. Obviously, a cat won't do, right?"

Cat? Puzzled, I looked down to my subordinate, but it seemed just as confused as I was.

Then I was brought down to the ground.

Huh? What about my hug?

Subordinate no. 1 rubbed itself on me while I was confused.

"Who would've thought Gastra would bring home an undesirable lover so soon?" Mom's subordinate looked up to the ceiling.

"GAu?"

You're a cat? I asked subordinate no. 1.

"Nyaa!"

Who cares if I'm a cat, the cat said as it approached to rub its body on me.

"Was the capital a bad influence?" Mom looked confused as she looked at me and the cat.

Hey, Mom, what's a cat!?

Chapter 102: Lili’s Worries

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	37
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

It’s been 10 days since we moved to the fortress. I’ve already grasped the layout of the surrounding area, so I was currently drawing the map on a wall in the king’s room. I used a short sword to carve it. Overall, I was able to carefully explore the area a two day’s distance from the fortress.

There were no beasts in the surrounding area that could hold a threat to me, even the ones that normally preyed on goblins. The area was relatively safe. Procuring food should pose no problem then, and with the increased birth rate, we should be able to increase our numbers quickly.

That settles the issue of quantity, leaving only the question of quality.

Currently my horde contains 1 knight, 7 nobles, 8 rares, 2 druids, 1 shaman, and 50 normal goblins. That’s including the wounded and the goblins that are currently away.

If it wasn’t for the existence of skills and magic in this world, the side with more numbers would surely win. But this world does have skills and magic,

thereby allowing the existence of truly powerful beings who could could literally slay a thousand soldiers by themselves.

The soldiers need to be raised well if we are to suppress such enemies.

For example, that man who swung his great sword with a ferocious smile, summoning storms of lightning to lay waste to the forest. How many such men does the human side have? I tried asking Shumea, but she couldn't give a straight answer. Apparently, her info mostly came from her brother. Sending him out might have been a bit too hasty.

Even if the goblins can't stop that man alone, a 2 on 1, no, even a 3 on 1 would be fine. I need to prepare the goblins enough to be able to fight such people evenly. The humans are numerous and they have many resources, a battle with them would surely expand, but even then, we have to win.

When I finished drawing the map, I stepped out.

Along the way I noted the knight class, Gi Ga, holding a class.

He was making use of the wide space within the fortress to teach the normal goblins how to use the spear. The goblins couldn't follow perfectly just yet, but regardless, it wasn't a waste to learn the spear under him. At the very least, it would increase their odds of surviving.

Goblins who had just grown out of their infancy were each given a spear by Gi Ga and made to thrust it into the empty air. They thrust and thrust, never stopping once, even as the wooden spear broke their hands and blood gushed out; Gi Ga's uncompromising training continued.

The length of their spears was increased according to their level.

There was a goblin amongst them whose spear was twice his height. Not a loafer, that one.

"Your Majesty!? ...Were you watching?" Gi Ga hurriedly approached me.

I told him to ignore me and continue.

The training of the goblins need to be improved wherever possible. Teaching them traps is one thing, but teaching them how to fight is a completely different matter. It is exceedingly difficult. To make things worse, our enemy,

the humans, have a huge advantage when it comes to the knowledge of fighting.

Once we step out of the forest, the battle will probably move to the plains. Necessary precautions need to be made if we don't want to be preyed upon by their cavalry. For that, allowing the goblins a way to practice their tactics is a must.

The terrain advantage belongs to the humans. We'll have to get one over them some other way. It can be tactics, ingenuity... anything. I need people capable of thinking such methods and the methods themselves.

We will be invading the humans.

When I think about our current position in this game of war, I realize it is not only the lower class goblins who need to be trained like this, but also the higher class.



It's been a while since Lili last visited her family.

Currently, it wasn't her parents who managed the house, but her uncle's family. Their house was situated in a small hill, surrounded by earthen walls, making it look just like a fortress.

She didn't think about it when she was young, but now that she thought about it, their house did indeed look like it was built for war. Even the produce grown in their garden were all fruits whose rinds could be eaten in desperate times. Compared to them, the farmers nearby all raised produce that was easy to sell. The difference between them was as clear as night and day.

By the time Lili woke up from her thoughts, she was in front of a stone wall upon which she had carved an oath during her youth.

It read: 'I shall earn the title of knight with my sword. I shall protect the people and vanquish the monsters.'

It was the oath she made with her grandfather. She recalled repeatedly saying that oath out loud as a kid despite not understanding what it meant. As long as she had that will, she would become a splendid knight, her grandfather once

said.

“Grandpa...”

Right now the person she had to protect was a single girl.

That was enough.

The king said he would bestow upon her the highest rank of Holy Knight. After Reshia left, he would give her the power to protect the town she was born in.

A gust of wind grazed Lili’s cheeks.

The wheat field swayed and the trees rustled, singing the song of the wind god. This was the land her grandfathers had cleared out, a blessed land.

For whom should she wield her blade?

She would protect Reshia, of course. That wouldn’t change. She could not throw away a girl like that who was burdened with a cruel fate. But once she becomes a holy knight, the power she would be responsible for would also increase. At that time, would she truly be forgiven for choosing to protect only a single girl?

“What should I do?”

She had a duty to either side.

Would she choose to save only one person? Or would she choose to protect the peace of a multitude of people?

“I shouldn’t be... hesitating.”

She should have already resolved herself. The peace of the people was Lady Reshia’s wish herself.

“So... With this sword, I will...”

She traced the text carved on the wall.

The next day, Lili received the title of Holy Knight.



330 days remain until the war with the humans.

The goblin rate of reproduction was truly something. Although it’s true that

the birth rate has increased, the fact that goblins could be trained almost immediately after being born was a truly spectacular trait of theirs.

With Gi Ga's hellish training course and the abundance of food, the goblins could quickly grow up into adulthood in only a week. The number of soldiers have already surpassed 100, and the number of noncombatants is already looking to break 70.

At this rate, I can probably stop worrying about our numbers altogether and focus on dealing with the quality issue.

The goblins have been frequently hunting to teach the higher class goblins how to lead the lower class goblins.

How should one hunt the big prey to minimize casualties? I taught the rares and the recently evolved druids, Gi Ba, Gi Bi, Gi Bu, Gi Be, and sent them out to hunt.

The goblins with the Man-Eating Snake skill who've received Verid's divine protection were all excellent goblins as long as they were kept away from humans.

The ferocious Gi Ba could handle the sword and spear with ease, allowing him to excel at stopping the prey from moving. The water mage, Gi Bi, could often hit the enemy's weak spot. The close-combatant, Gi Bu, could fight in many ways, from using his axe to using his hands. The one-armed Gi Be could fight with his axe, sword, or spear; any enemy that approached him would be fiercely met by his arsenal of close-combat weaponry.

They were constantly bathed in blood causing the morale of their fellow goblins to rise while their enemies cowered. The weapons they used were improved as well. In the past, we used stone axes and wooden spears, but after the battle with the humans, we managed to acquire iron weapons for everyone.

Unfortunately, the weapons would eventually wear down. We need to find a way to repair them soon.

"The enemy has come, Your Majesty," the one-armed Gi Be said, waking me up from my pondering.

"That is an annie spider," I replied.

“If I recall correctly, this spider’s saliva is poisonous, right, Your Majesty?” The water mage, Gi Bi, said.

That scholarly manner of talking made me chuckle.

“Hit it, kick it!” Gi Bu yelled.

“I suppose cutting its legs would be a good idea?” The fierce Gi Ba said, wanting to take the initiative.

“Yes, go!”

At my signal, Gi Ba ran. He slipped through the long legs of the annie spider, then with the stroke of his sword, he cut them off. Suddenly, the water mage, Gi Bi’s, water balls came raining down on the spider, denting its skin.

“GURUuu!” Gi Bu growled as his wild dogs kicked off against the ground. As the wild dogs caught the attention of the annie spider from above, Gi Bu’s axe came swinging for its legs. When Gi Bu was near the annie spider, he suddenly threw away the axe and started kicking at the stomach of the spider from below.

Quite the shrewd goblin, isn’t he?

As the annie spider’s stance broke, the one-armed Gi Be decapitated the spider with his spear.

Gradually, the light left the spider’s eyes, but the goblins didn’t stop attacking until it was completely silent.

“Good job, remember, this is how you fight together. Make sure to also remember to consider the normal class goblin’s limits,” I said to ensure that they didn’t forget the importance of working together. These goblins would most likely be a part of the main force in the next battle after all.

“As the king commands.”

After hearing their reply, I went back to the village.

Chapter 103: Demihuman Village

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	37
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

“I’ve brought news, Your Majesty.”

To strengthen the horde I had the rare goblins hunt the surrounding area, while I had the noble goblins go to the west to look for a path.

Gi Ji Arsil came to report their findings.

“We found a demihuman village. It’s about a four-day’s distance to the west and another day’s distance to the south. I was warned not to get any closer when I approached, so I took the others and went back.”

—Demihumans. After hearing about them from Shumea, I did expect there would be some villages to the west, but I didn’t think we’d actually stumble onto one. How fortunate.

“They warned you, did they? That’s not bad at all.”

Since they didn’t attack immediately, they must be intelligible. It’s good to avoid needless fights. I hope they’re willing to hear us goblins out, but if not, I’ll

just have to take the human, Shumea, or the elf, Selena, along.

“So, describe to me these demihumans. How did they look?”

“They had legs like a spider’s, but their upper body was like a human’s. There might be other types in the other villages.”

Creatures not humans, but look like them. According to Shumea, some of these demihumans are friendly with humans, but there’s an even greater number of them living in the border afraid.

They were created by the god of wind and the god of earth, right?

I hear they used to live in the plains, but...

“Gi Ji, is that village situated in the plains?”

“No, it’s inside a forest. They built a nest of some sort. At first, I even thought it was a nest of annie spiders or giant spiders, but someone called out to us when we tried approaching.”

“Hrm.”

Well, it’s not like everything you hear is true.

I don’t know whether that’s always been their home, or they were driven away and forced to live there, but it is a fact that they are living in a forest now.

“Alright, good job. I’ll be paying that village a visit tomorrow. I’ll be relying on you to lead the way.”

“As you command.”

The next day, I took Gi Ji, Shumea, Selena, the shaman, Gi Za Zakuend, the wind mage, Gi Do, and the ferocious Gi Ba with his three-man cell group to the demihuman village.

I took only a few people with me to avoid alerting them. To ensure we had enough firepower, I made sure to bring the druid-class goblins.

According to Selena, the demihumans prefer to fight upfront rather than rely on magic. I’ve been talking with her to gather information ever since I got that report about the demihumans’ sighting.

It seems there is an old oath between the elves and the demihumans.

They would protect each other's territories as long as they did not encroach on each other's domains. The elves excelled in magic, while the demihumans used their strong bodies to hunt. I learned all sorts of things from Selena, from the way they marked their territories to the way they greeted each other.

Among the things I've learned was the favorite things of the demihumans. When I asked Selena about the spider-legged people, it turns out they were actually known as the Araneae. One of the araneaen tribes apparently liked fishes.

We were going to negotiate with them anyway, so I figured I might as well bring some gifts.

I checked with Kuzan whether it was possible to fish from the river flowing in the basement of the abyss, and apparently, it was indeed possible. It was just that the goblins preferred to eat meat, so no one ever really bothered.

When I got the fishes, I had to look for a way to carry them, as the distance to the village was quite far. They would spoil before we even got close. I figured I'd put them in some sort of container like a jar with water inside, but it turns out there's actually no such container in the goblin villages.

With the container plan out, I thought I'd smoke them instead. But when I tried doing it myself, I failed.

"Now what?" I said to no one in particular when I noted Shumea passing from the corner of my eyes.

Wait, there is someone who can help!

"Shumea, can you spare a moment?"

"What is it, Boss?"

After explaining my situation, she agreed to help me smoke the fishes. It's really inconvenient being a goblin. When the fishes were done, I placed them inside a box made out of bark.

They were poorly made, but it was better than nothing.

Along the way I conversed with Selena on matters regarding the demihumans. We moved a four-day's distance west, and then another day's distance south.

I had a normal goblin carry the box as we made way to the village.

“We’re near.” Selena’s halved elven ears twitched.

“You can tell?” Shumea asked.

Sharpening my ears, I looked around us.

Hopefully everything goes smoothly.

“There are a lot of masses with seemingly eight-legs moving near us. The village should be no more than an hour away.”

Selena held her handmade bow. She looked so happy it seemed like she wanted to jump out in joy. She’s been showing a lot more emotions lately compared to when she first came to the fortress. I guess she’s finally gotten used to us.

A giant spider appeared along the way, but the goblins quickly took care of it.

“Ho...” Gi Za muttered before letting out a breath in admiration.

The scene before us was just that amazing. Densely packed trees were woven together with spider threads, creating a perfectly closed wall with no openings.

Without thinking it through, I tried touching the thread.

It was flexible, a little sticky, and thick enough that I couldn’t easily push through it with my finger. Judging from how much of it was used, it should be safe to assume that the demihumans are able to produce it.

The branches up above rustled, and I looked up. Up the defensive wall was a demihuman standing.

The lower part of his body was a spider’s, but the upper part was a human’s. Muscles covered his whole body, and a spear was on his left hand. He looked at us menacingly.

“Goblins, what business do you have here?” The man’s voice seemed muffled. Was that because of fear? Or was it because of anger?

“It’s the man from before,” Gi Ji said, “our king wishes to speak with you!”

I stepped forward.

“We are the denizens of the east. We came here to negotiate with you, the Araneae of the Household of Crystals. We brought some gift too. I’d like for you to receive it.”

I took the box from the normal goblin and threw it up the wall of threads.

The box landed right by the demihuman’s feet. He looked at it, then he checked the contents.

“The reason you goblins know our favorite food is because of that elf?” The demihuman looked at Selena with a sharp gaze, but there was no intent to kill.

But that pressure was enough to make Selena hide behind Shumea.

Shumea wryly smiled. “It’s true Selena is the one who told them about the fish, but the one who thought of preparing it in the first place is that boss over there.”

“Don’t open your mouth lightly, filthy human!!” the demihuman was filled with wrath when he spoke to Shumea.

“Gee, sorry...” Shumea shrugged her shoulders as she lightly scratched her head.

“What is your response?” I asked the demihuman.

My raised voice seemed to have somewhat pressured the demihuman, as he quivered a bit. “Wait for a while!” He said as he took the box and left.

“What do you think?” I asked Selena, but she didn’t have a clear answer to give.

After waiting for a while, three demihumans appeared above the white wall. They walked vertically down the wall to us.

“In honor of the old oath, greetings, elf.” A woman stepped out from the three araneae demihumans. She glanced at me for a moment, before turning to Selena.

I’m sure she means no ill will. The old oath was just so important that as demihumans they had to greet the elf first despite knowing I was the one with the most authority in our group.

I wonder just how much hold that oath has on them.

“A pleasure to make your acquaintance. I am a daughter of the sylph, a descendant of the forests and the winds.”

“The pleasure is mine. I am a daughter of the araneae, a descendant of the crystal.”

After she finished exchanging greetings with selena, she turned to me and bowed her head.

“I am the Black Darkness of the Demonic Children,” I introduced myself.

“It is an honor to meet you. I am a daughter of the araneae.”

It appears it is customary for the demihumans to first see who it is they are dealing with. There was some shred of intimacy in the way she spoke to Selena just now, but when she spoke to me, her manner of speaking was quite stiff. Nerves? Or is there something more to it?

“I am here as a representative of my village, my name is Nikea.”

goblins

“I am the king of the demonic children of chaos who live in the east.”

The two male araneae behind her must’ve been her guards. Their whole body was covered in muscles. The sharp gaze they looked at me with spoke of their ferocity.

“To what does our Fizona owe the honor of this visit?”

“I wish to trade.”

The demihumans are just as I expected them to be with strong and sturdy bodies. I would really like to add them to my army, but it seems the demihumans and the elves are a proud bunch.

Their kind are ill-suited for subservience. It’s because of that that they couldn’t create a vast country and instead ended up in this tiny village. I doubt they would so easily prostrate themselves before me.

So first I’ll have to find out their situation. Neither Shumea nor Selena was privy to their true state of affairs, so I’ll have to go about this the long way.

“A trade? If so then we will only trade goods for goods.”

I feel like her eyes sparkled just now.

That probably means she thinks we can give her what she wants.

“We wish to trade our fish for your threads.”

We don't have any currency right now, so the word 'trade' is probably beyond the goblins' comprehension. To the goblins, it is enough to simply take from others what you lack. But a policy like that can't last forever.

If you attack someone and steal what is theirs to fill what you are lacking. When the time comes that you need more of it, from where will you take it? The people you stole from before have long died. The dead cannot produce anything. To be honest, even I'm not confident that the goblins would indeed be capable of producing something themselves.

The goblins are skilled hunters. They can even use traps now. In fact, the higher goblins have even started to use traps other than the pitfall I taught them. But the issue on food isn't something that can be solved forever with just hunting. Right now it's still manageable, but with the goblin's explosive reproduction rate, the forest will eventually be hunted bare.

That's why I don't want to take advantage of the goblin's love for meat. As much as possible their hunts should be kept to a minimum, taking only what is needed. That's why I don't want to trade anything else from our hunts beyond the meat. Other things like the skin of the beasts shouldn't be traded. Doing so would only make things worse. But at the same time, choosing not to trade such things limits my options.

Should I trade our services? That's not a bad idea, but the demihuman's strength is still currently a mystery. I could just fight them anyway or I could sell the service of our military... But a decision now is too hasty. I need more information.

In the worst case, I'll just have to trade those fishes.

“...We are currently not lacking in fish,” Nikea said.

“Oh?”

Is she bluffing or telling the truth? To be honest I'm not used to negotiating,

so I can't tell.

But—

“Then what is it that you're interested in? We are trading because we wish to form a good relationship with the araneae,” I bluntly said that it was not wealth that we were after. I said it with a little bit of pressure though. They shouldn't forget that the goblins could become trouble for them in the near future.

I'm sure she got the message.

If this negotiation fails, then so be it. We'll just have to get their cooperation by force.

We both have something on the line in this trade. On my end, I have the goblin's power and their future, on her end, she has her village.

It would be problematic if they forgot which side was stronger.

Our negations continued for some time even as I started to grow impatient.

“There's a favor I would like to ask. Would you hear me out?” She said.

“It's a request, so naturally I would have to hear you out first,” I said rudely as if to remind her of the difference in strength between our races. Nikea frowned for a moment before speaking her request.

She was poker-faced again as she spoke, but when I heard her request, I was shocked.

Chapter 104: Man-Eating Tiger I

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	37
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

Olspiegel

“You want me to defeat the Man-Eating Tiger?”

Nikea nodded. Her eyes weren’t lying. They were calm and unwavering.

Looks like she’s serious.

“It’s not literally a tiger. The term ‘Man-Eating Tiger’ is a sort of inside term among us.”

Why did they have to go out of their way to call it that? I recall Selena mentioning that the demihumans had a habit of likening fallen demihumans to animals. If so, then this man-eating tiger must be ‘fallen’ in some way. Meaning, it must be a living organism of some sort.

“Very well,” I said.

Gi Za spoke to me in hushed voices from behind. “Are you sure it’s wise to accept so quickly?”

“It’s fine,” I said back, “we have to show our strength anyway.”

An unexpected but fortunate turn of events. Honestly, I was uneasy trading only the fishes from the basement. With this we'll be able to show our might while at the same time trading our services.

"Thank you very much," Nikea said with strained breath, then she looked at me with a challenging gaze. "The term 'Man-Eating Tiger' is an alias of sort. Its true name is Gurfia."

When Nikea uttered that name her two escorts gulped.

Looks like this piece of info will prove quite valuable.

Centaur

"He was a young but powerful member of the Man-Horse Tribe. Unfortunately, just some time ago, a massacre had caused him to lose his sanity."

"Why is an araneae such as yourself so privy to the matters of the centaur?"

Nikea gulped. For a moment she glanced at Selena.

"...Despite all of us being descendants of the crystal we do not interact with each other. That... changed recently."

Oh? The demihumans are trying to work together? What valuable information, and how fortunate too. If I was any slower, they might have succeeded and created their own country.

I think I know why she glanced at Selena. I smiled as I thought of the reason. She probably can't lie in front of her. It seems bringing Selena was a good idea after all.

"As a test to see if we could truly work together, Gurfia went with the other young ones to live in a single village, but..." Nikea said.

"The village was destroyed," I concluded for her.

Nikea nodded. She seems to be telling the truth. When you put her story and Shumea's together, it seems likely that it was that rapier-user who did it. Shumea's former master who used Selena's power to move about in the forest. I won't thank him, but it seems his actions have had unexpected consequences.

"Gurfia managed to hold on to his life, but he ate the flesh of another

descendant of the crystal.”

When Nikea said that Selena screamed and Shumea held her.

“In exchange for gaining power, he lost his reason. To this day he lurks the forest, unable to forget the taste of his fellow demihuman’s blood.”

Nikea was biting her lips by the time she finished speaking.

“And the demihuman union you put up has left this man-eating tiger alone?”

“...The union or rather the promised cooperation between us isn’t actually functioning. Most of its proponents participated in that village, so there hasn’t been much progress at all.”

I see. That’s not bad for me. Since they still haven’t solidified their union, there should still be room for me to interfere.

“Very well. But before we begin, I would like to make a contract with you.”

“Meaning?”

“...I shall rid you of this man-eating tiger of yours, but in exchange, I would like for you to trade with us. I would also like you to invite my subordinates to your village.”

“...As you wish. The day you defeat the man-eating tiger, we araneae shall do as you ask, this I swear.”

I added the condition of sending my subordinates to her village as a precaution. Her village will be my foothold to the west.

I also need to prepare for the possibility of the araneae betraying me.

Nikea might have sworn these things before me, but that doesn’t mean the rest of her tribe would accept me. Not to mention, I even have a human and an elf with me. I don’t know exactly what they think of them, but I at least know they hate the humans.

“There are a few things I’d like to know before we go.”

Nikea filled me in the details, and then we left to subjugate the man-eating tiger.



Along the way I started thinking about the blood of the demihumans. The reason Selena went wild was also because she was made to drink it. If so, then it should stand to reason that the blood of the demihumans is able to bring out someone's latent power when ingested by certain races.

"Shumea, are there any rumors among humans regarding demihuman blood?"

"Hmm? I don't think so. That bastard, Gene, just happened to have a hobby of hurting others, so..."

Gene seems to be the name of that rapier-using man.

He forcefully made Selena drink demihuman blood.

I glanced at Selena whose countenance had paled.

Selena seemed to understand the intentions behind my question, she said, "According to knowledge passed down among us elves, when demihuman blood is consumed in scant amounts, it can act as a stimulant. That's the reason why the humans persecuted them before."

She held Shumea tightly as she spoke.

"Do you want some, Your Majesty?" The assassin, Gi Ji, asked.

"No, it's about that demihuman-eater that Nikea mentioned," I said back.

"You think it'll be useful to us?" The shaman, Gi Za, asked.

"That's one part of it. It might awake some unknown power within us after all." I looked sharply up ahead as I wryly smiled. "The issue is how strong that demihuman-eater is. Is his power merely due to losing his sanity, ridding him of the limits that once shackled him? Or is the power he wields now something completely different. That's what I'm wondering about."

The former isn't a problem. He would be no different from the mad shishi, Gi Zu. But the latter is different. A power like that encroaches on the unknown.

I should change the topic though. It won't do to have the goblins thinking the wrong way when it seems like we could work together with the demihumans.

"...Are you going to kill them if their blood can make you stronger?" Selena

fearfully asked.

I clicked my tongue at the back of my head. “No, it would be a waste to throw away their cordiality. If we can avoid needless conflict, that would be best.”

Selena heaved a sigh of relief.

I added a warning. “But there will be no mercy for traitors. If the blood of traitors prove useful, then we’ll take every drop of it.”

“You can’t,” Selena said.

“Remember, Selena. We are not peerless in the forest. I refuse a future where the humans can do with me however they please. I am the king of the demonic children of chaos. I kneel to none. If there is anyone who stands in my way, be they demihuman, beasts, or elves, I will use all of my power to destroy them.”

Until now she has seen my gentler side. Seeing this other face of mine seemed to be a great shock to her, as it made her look down on the ground, her countenance even paler.

“...To clarify, I don’t particularly hate the humans, Shumea. You don’t have to glare.”

“I’m not glaring or anything, Boss,” Shumea said. “I was just thinking how you don’t act like a goblin.”

Shumea patted Selena’s head, who was currently sniffing.

I certainly don’t act like a goblin, do I?

“Your Highness, someone is following us. Should we leave him be?” The assassin, Gi Ji, asked.

I looked to Selena for confirmation. She was still pale, but she nodded her head. “...Our pursuers seems to be araneae. They seem to be only following us.”

The gaze Selena looked at me with seemed to be puzzled.

I don’t actually know everything, you know.

“Traitors, or perhaps mere observers,” Gi Za said.

Indeed.

“Unforgivable. Shall we drive them away?” The ferocious Gi Ba said.

“No, I want information. Let’s catch them instead.”

I ordered the assassin Gi Ji and the ferocious Gi Ba to set up a trap for our pursuers instead, then we continued along our way with Selena in the lead. Halfway through we split off from Gi Za’s group and proceeded along as if nothing was amiss.

Selena was always keeping tabs on our pursuers, so our pace was quite slow. The pursuers never approached us, and our distance remained the same.

Gradually, we neared the location where the trap was set.

“...The trap seems to have been triggered. I heard a scream,” Selena said.

“Good!” I exclaimed, though at the back of my head, I was puzzled.

We went back the way we came at full speed. Selena and Shumea wouldn’t be able to keep up with my pace, so I left them with Gi Za.

They seemed to know where we were all the time. How did they end up falling for the trap?

Well, I’ll find out soon.



“...What are you bastards planning!?” One of the araneae demihumans asked.

“That’s what we should be asking you. Why are you following us?” Gi Ji calmly asked.

After the demihumans fell into the pitfall, Gi Ba and his three-man cell took out their weapons and pointed them at the demihumans.

The araneae demihumans were all men.

“We were making sure you wouldn’t tell the humans about our village!” The demihuman said.

“In other words, you can’t trust us despite your oath,” I said.

“You’re asking us to believe in some filthy goblins!? You bastards are like the

mice of this forest.”

Apparently, he doesn't realize that insulting us was the same thing as insulting themselves who fell for our trap. Are the demihumans muscle-brains too after all?

As I was thinking that to myself, Gi Za who had finally caught up had apparently heard our earlier exchange.

“Your Majesty, would you mind if I put to test their earlier words just now?” Gi Za asked.

A human-like face and a ferocious smile as he looked at the trapped demihumans. Just what kind of mad scientist are you supposed to be?

I agree though, these demihumans don't really look like the type to fess up. That lie just now wasn't very believable either.

I took one of the four long swords sheathed by my waist.

The others seemed to have notice what I was about to do, as Selena suddenly looked like she was about to cry, while the other goblins were expectant.

“Please wait!”

Suddenly, Nikea came running with two other demihumans.

“Goblin King, please wait!”

Nikea wore a frantic look as she approached me.

Gi Za was about to stop her, but I ordered him to stand back, then I spoke. “What's the matter? I was just about to punish these men for their betrayal.”

My threatening posture was a bit exaggerated, but it was plenty threatening.

“I know I'm being impolite, but please hold your hand for just a moment,” Nikea said as she bowed her head so low as to touch the ground.

I sheathed my sword. “Well, alright. I'll at least hear you out.”

With a glance, I ordered Gi Ba's group to put away their weapons. The two araneae demihumans were left in the hole, however.

“Thank you. Your Majesty, I take responsibility for this incident. Please punish

me,” Nikea said.

“Chief...” Said one of the demihumans who came with her, while the other one called out her name, “Master Nikea.”

The two demihumans still trapped in the hole were speechless as they watched Nikea. It seems she’s actually quite loved in their village. In that case, there’s no point in harming her. If they value her so, it might be better to use her as a hostage instead.

If I can pin her down, the person responsible for their entire village, then it might become easier to bring the demihumans under my rule.

“So, what exactly was this whole thing about? We would like an explanation,” Gi Za said in my place while I was quietly thinking.

Well, alright. The demihumans have an inclination of putting a lid over unpleasant things. If I take a stance where I’m not willing to have a change of heart unless they properly explain, we’ll be able to exert our superiority wordlessly, and at the same time, make it appear that I’m really angry.

I made sure to wrinkle my face with a frown to appear even more menacing.

Gi Za’s really useful. Though I think he might just be really salty over the possibility of not being able to taste demihuman blood.

“...Those people are fledglings of the monocrystal. They chased after you because of my inability to properly explain. There is no other reason. Please...”

Monocrystal? Considering she said fledgling of the monocrystal, I suppose it’s just a term pertaining to their age. I wasn’t sure though, so I asked her about it. Because of that the situation took an unexpected turn.

One of the demihumans trapped in the hole finally couldn’t stand seeing their chief with her head bowed to the ground.

“Chief, you don’t really have to go that far...”

But the moment he said that, Nikea suddenly erupted. “What you unfilial fools tainted was none other than the pride of the descendants of the crystals! We exchanged oaths with these people! If word gets out that we were unable to keep our word – an oath we made just a while ago no less – we will forever

be branded as a people without honor! You have shamed our proud tribe!”

Her voice held within it a pressure equal that of my own howl.

All voices went silent as even the very air seemed to rip at her wrathful voice.

Chapter 105: Man-Eating Tiger II

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	37
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

In the end, our two araneaen pursuers were taken away by Nikea’s escorts.

“Lord Nikea, are you not planning on returning?” I asked, the manner I spoke with her this time was much more polite. She was an ally, after all. It wouldn’t hurt to show her some respect.

Nikea shook her head. “No, I must take responsibility for this incident. Please let me show you the way.”

I did wonder for a moment whether it was really alright for someone in her position to so casually decide that, but considering I wasn’t any better myself, I refrained from saying anything more.

“If this happens a second time, we shall handle it ourselves. I hope you understand,” Gi Za said.

He really intends to test my words, huh. What is he going to do if he loses his mind?

“Your bad habit is showing,” I warned him.

Gi Za quietly laughed. “There can be no progress unless one remembers his own failures, Your Highness.”

I was speechless.

In any case, it seems that the elves acknowledge the effect of demihuman blood as a stimulant when used in sparing amounts. Doesn't that mean that it's essentially safe to use?

But then again, our current mission is to subjugate a demihuman who has lost its sanity after drinking too much.

“This incident will not be repeated, I stake my life on it,” Nikea said.

Is this how all demihumans are?

“Enough of that. There should still some distance until our destination.” I said.

Nikea nodded. “Yes, we need to head north a bit more. After a day of walking, the ruins of a village should come to view. That place is its base.”

The remains of the slaughtered village.

“Since we have some time until then, why don't you tell me a bit more about the descendants of the crystals.”

“About us?” Nikea asked, puzzled.

“Yes. Being isolated from the world as I am, I know little about the descendants of the crystals. In a sense, it could be said that getting to know you is the very reason behind our trade.”

I have to know.

As for what I'll do afterwards... Well, I'll think about it then.

“What will you do after knowing?” Nikea asked.

“I am going to make a country. When that time comes, I will take those worthy with me.” I answered.

“A goblin kingdom...” She muttered.

The silence that followed after was short, but it was deep. The demihumans

failed to unite themselves. What I intend to do is something that they would have done had they succeeded in their first step. Unite themselves and then create a country of their own, that would have been their path, if not for the tragedy their fellow demihumans met.

When you look at it that way, it suddenly becomes obvious why Nikea went solemn. "... I understand," she said, "there was also that incident just now. I'll tell you about us."

The answer that came after the silence was exactly what I'd hoped for.



I walked through the forest as Nikea spoke about the demihumans. Around the time when the body of the Fire God had sunk past the trees, we made camp and ate.

Rodo

The history of the demihumans was much longer compared to the goblins'.

They are said to be one of the first created along with the elves. They had been living on the land before the humans were even created. Throughout their long history, the demihumans split off ceaselessly, until one day, the 'great war' happened.

In the great war, where all living creatures fought, the number of the living was greatly reduced. It was then that the humans began hunting them. With their numbers few, the demihumans had no choice but to run away to a place the humans could not reach. They ran to the depths of the forest, the untrodden lands, but they suffered even more losses.

The goddess of the underworld's invasion concluded 400 years ago. At first, the humans did not know from where the goddess' army would attack, so they sought to illuminate the whole world.

The deep valley, the thick forest. That was where the demihumans chose to live, but they were chased away and killed again. Even the clan Nikea's Araneae belonged to was driven away. In the end, they ended up in the forest. This happened 300 years ago.

The elves gave them permission to use the lands, so there was no war between their kind and the elves. In fact, they would even help the elves

whenever they were in trouble.

I asked Shumea if those things really happened.

“You think I’d know!?” She angrily retorted.

Well... There is probably no human left alive from that time.

It’s an old story, so I’m sure it wouldn’t be strange if some points have distorted, but in any case, the main point is that the humans chased them into the forest. If nothing else, their anger is the real thing. Nikea isn’t one to let her emotions rule her, but I think it would still be best to keep Shumea away from her.

I learned several things from my talk with Nikea. The demihumans apparently put a lot of emphasis on duty.

I still haven’t thought of a way to pull them in, but it feels like I’ve gotten one step closer to conquering the demihumans.

We goblins don’t have any difficulties moving about in the night, but Shumea, being human as she is, still isn’t quite used to it, and surprisingly, Nikea too. She’s a spider, so I thought she’d be pretty good at it, but apparently, that’s not the case.

Apparently, it was easier to snuggle up to fire than to the darkness. How peculiar.

“There is one thing I want to ask. How did our pursuers know where we were?”

“It’s probably because of our special ^{skill} ability,” Nikea said as she drew threads from the end of one of her legs. She ignored the shock of everyone around her as she wove those threads and brought them before me.

“We can make our threads as thick and as tough as we wish. I’m sure someone must’ve attached an extremely thin thread on you and your men.” Nikea used one of her other legs to shoot out a thread just thick enough that we could see it, and wrapped it around the nearby trees.

So this is their special ability. Demihumans can’t use magic, but in exchange, they’ve been blessed with special abilities and a powerful body. It seems

Selena's info was right.

"I see. Yet even with those special abilities of yours you still can't defeat the man-eating tiger?"

The wall of threads I saw back in their village was not something that could be easily destroyed.

"Everyone has their strength and weaknesses," Nikea curtly replied.

I silently nodded in response. She probably won't reveal such crucial information to me. We're not so close that we would be comfortable telling each other our weaknesses.



"A four-legged creature is approaching, Your Highness," Gi Ji said.

I looked around.

"Is it far?" I asked.

"No, it's almost here!" Gi Ji replied, but by the time he finished speaking, the surrounding trees rustled.

"GyaUAAAaGAGAAaAA!"

Was it drawn by the light?

It struck out with the spear in its hand against the trunk of a nearby tree, and then... it stood. On the other end of its cracked skin was burning red flame.

Is there fire underneath its skin?

The spear that penetrated the tree was red and hot; the tree it penetrated quickly charred.

"It's here. Gi Za, Gi Do, cover me!"

Enchant

"Turn Me into a Blade!"

Black flames clad my long sword as I stepped out. Our clash was only for an instant. A strong wind accompanied that thing's spear as it swung it down.

Sparks flashed from its spear.

The heat coming from that thing's hands was heating the spear. Demihumans can't use magic, so that means... that's its special ^{skill} ability!

If the araneae have their threads, then the centaur have their equivalent. Isn't it hot? It seems its skill works completely different from my black flames.

The black flames looking like fire is nothing more than a coincidence in invocation of ether. This enemy is different. Even its very body is literally burning from within.

Our weapons clashed. One was a long sword clad in black flames, the other was a burning red spear.

As black flames mingled with red, I challenged the enemy to a melee. The enemy had the advantage in reach, so the closer we fought, the more advantageous it would be for me. As our weapons locked, I tried to push forward, but the enemy deflected my sword and swung down its iron spear.

In that instant, I closed in on the enemy. The one-eyed snake's blessing made the flow of ether smoother, allowing me to inject ether directly into my legs.

My sword wielded under my arms, I sent forth an attack that would quickly settle the battle.

In an instant, one step forward!

The attack unleashed, faster than any other!

...And yet!

"GlyaUAAAaGAGAAaAA!"

The centaur howled, and in the instant my sword was about to reach its body, a wall of flames blocked my view, slowing down my attack.

"Nu!?"

I tried to cut the wall of flames down from the side, but the enemy's spear came sweeping into my arm. When it hit, I was sent flying like a ball.

What kind of unreasonable strength is this!?

"GUu!?" I stifled the cry of pain that sought to come out as I once again wielded my sword. But when I glanced at it, I noticed it had already been

broken. I threw away the sword and took out a new one from the remaining swords sheathed by my waist.

“GYaUAAAaGAGAAaAA!” The centaur howled.

I thought it would attack, but it just struck its spear into a nearby tree.

What’s going on? Well, in any case, it would be rude to look a gift horse in the mouth.

Not a trace was left of the wall of flames that had obstructed my vision. Belatedly, pain came running through my body. It sought to take away my consciousness, but I endured it.

After sending me flying, it seems to have changed its target to Shumea and the others.

As it howled, it kicked its hooves against the ground.

“Tch, Selena, it’s coming,” Shumea said to Selena as she took on that incoming pressure head on. She didn’t bother to try and hide her shaking legs. Wielding her spear, she stepped in front of Selena.

“Gi Za, support them!” I said.

“On it!” Gi Za replied.

Gi Za and Gi Do invoked their magic. Although it wasn’t from pointblank range, the wind magic they unleashed had formidable firepower, but a swing of the centaur’s spear was all it took for the centaur to dispel it.

“How!?” Gi Za spat.

He invoked his wind a second time. This time it was far stronger, a cyclone even forming.

The centaur howled as it swung its spear against the cyclone. The wind caught fire as they clashed, and in the end, it vanished, but it was not for nothing, as the centaur stopped moving.

That’s good enough!

Accel

“My life is like a cloud of dust!”

Ether blew up from behind me, propelling me forward through a wall of air.

I kept going even as my body neared the centaur, then I... rammed my body into it!

“Boss!?”

Our bodies only touched for a moment, but my shoulder and my arms already smelled burnt. But that’s only a given, I suppose. After all that thing is burning hot enough to spread its heat into the spear.

“I’m fine!” I swung my sword to show I was alright. At the same time, I clad my sword in black flames again.

It was time for round two.

“GYaUAAAaGgagaAaAA!”

“GURUuuAAaAAaAA!”

As the enemy howled, I howled back with my World Devouring Howl.

Chapter 106: Man-Eating Tiger III

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	37
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

I tried to bind the enemy’s movements with my World Devouring Howl, but the enemy howled again. My World Devouring Howl seemed to have slowed it down, but that second howl allowed it to shake those effects off.

Equal? No, he’s a little weaker.

He’s mad though. If I’m careless, I’m the one who’ll end up injured. I still have three swords left. Can I finish him off with just those?

Enchant

“Turn Me into a Blade!”

Black flames clad my sword as I faced the enemy again. The centaur kicked its hooves against the ground as it inclined its body toward me. It looked just like a bull about to charge.

“GYaaRUAaAAa!” The maddened centaur charged toward me.

I swung my sword from below.

I filled my legs with ether and kicked off powerfully against the ground to

close the distance and nullify the long reach of the enemy's spear. At the same time, I unleashed my sword from below toward the centaur with a force capable of breaking even a boulder.

The centaur swung down its spear as I swung up my sword.

—It's a small difference, but the faster one is me!

The lower part of the centaur was cut as my sword slashed up to meet the descending spear. I stopped for a moment to confirm the enemy's wounds.

"GYaaRURUAAAA!" The centaur howled.

But the enemy didn't care about its wounds even a little, and it swung down its spear again. Taking on the force of the descending spear was just like taking a falling tree head on. I was pushed back.

—Is the enemy stronger!?

My legs sunk into the ground as my arms endured the pressure of the spear. When I tried to move, I found that I couldn't. I clicked my tongue.

The enemy howled a deafening cry as it swung down its spear a second time. There was no hesitation nor pain to it, only the desire to crush the enemy before it.

Accel

"My life is like a cloud of dust!"

I blew up ether behind me and rammed my body into the centaur again. I expected to send the enemy flying, but it managed to endure the force this time.

The centaur's legs sunk into the ground, but the one suffering was me. The heat emanating from its body was just too hot.

The part that touched its body had already started to burn.

Shield

"Let my body be inviolable!"

The burns stopped when I invoked Shield, but then the enemy's spear came swinging from the right. I dodged it by bending down my body, and then as I jumped back, I swung my sword toward its arms.

—It's hard!

The skin of the demihuman was hard like an armor. As my sword flicked off, it affected the direction of the enemy's spear. I managed to cut the enemy, but it was a shallow wound, unable to reach to the bones. Regardless, the enemy raged as it looked to kill me.

"GYaAaaRURUAaAA!"

Seemingly having lost itself in its rage, the centaur charged at me with its spear held high. It was a charge that wouldn't lose out even to the human cavalry.

Enchant

"Turn Me into a Blade!"

Third Impact

I invoked enchant along with the Third Chant and the King's Dance at the Edge of Death. All the damage I've been receiving until now would be inflicted double to the enemy. That power burned in the black flames that clad my sword. My Sword Mastery A-helped perfect my movement as much as it could.

Using only the necessary power to move my arms as my elastic legs supported them, I took a breath in preparation of the fastest attack I could muster.

The enemy was pointblank.

The spear was the first to descend, and then my sword.

—But the faster one is still me!

Spear and sword clashed in midair. Red flames mingled with black. It was a battle of strength as our weapons clashed, but in the end, we both deflected to the side.

Both of our stances broke, but I managed to endure it, and as I turned to the centaur, I saw the enemy wide-open.

Forcefully, I took my sword back and thrust it toward the enemy.

—I'll be taking your life!

My sword entered the chest of the centaur, and it stopped moving.

Still clad in black flames, I gradually pulled out my sword from the body of the

unmoving centaur.

When I'd pulled it out, it suddenly occurred to me that the battle might not be over just yet, so I reassumed my stance.

"Get back!" Gi Za said.

But then Gi Za called out, and I reflexively jumped back. The spot where I was just moments ago was now taken up by the fire pouring out from the wounds of the centaur. The shaman, Gi Za, tried to snuff out the fire with his wind, but like pouring water on hot stone it had no effect.

The raging flames dominated those powerful winds that could tear apart even iron.

"Abominable... Humans..." The words that left the maddened centaur were full of hate.

Seeing it speak surprised me a bit, but it didn't change my resolve to kill it.

The flames looked for me, but Gi Za's winds altered its direction, opening a path which I took. It was scorching hot, so hot just the winds were enough to burn one's skin and keeping one's eyes open was nearly impossible. I called the black flames upon my sword once more.

If I could get past those red flames, I would be able to reach the centaur's body. It won't die with a sword to the chest, so this time I'll have to take its head.

But when I was about to take the centaur's head, the flames pouring out from its body tried to slam into me like a blunt weapon.

—How!?

Spitting the same words in my mind that Gi Za spat a while ago, I met the red flames with my own black flames, but I immediately regretted it. It was foolish to try and cut flames with a sword, yet contrary to my expectations, when my sword met the flames, I felt a weight behind them, and I was able to deflect them.

—A chance!

Quickly changing my thoughts, I took back my sword and held it underneath

my arms as I ran for the centaur's head.

I swung my sword with great power. If this hit, even its bones would surely be crushed.

But in that instant, something suddenly wrapped around me and the centaur, a white something... Spider threads!

"Ku!?" I said in surprise.

"...GYaaRURUAAaa!" The centaur howled.

"What are you doing, Lord Nikea!?" Gi Ji asked.

The thread wrapped around me and the centaur clearly came from her legs.

"It would be better if we could take him back alive," she said.

Those words poured cold water over our intense battle.

So that's what she was planning!

Nikea calmly pulled on her threads despite my glare.

"My threads are the toughest among our tribe. They cannot be cut no matter how strong one is. Goblin King, do not waste your strength," Nikea said as she watched me struggle.

The assassin, Gi Ji Arsil, pointed his blade at her. He said in a cold voice, "Do you intend to harm the king? Release him at once!"

"I forgot to mention this, but..." Nikea began to say.

It was then that I noticed the centaur in pain. A closer look would show that the threads wrapped around it had turned purple.

"My threads have toxin in them. If you hurt me even a little, a powerful poison will enter your king," Nikea said.

Suddenly, the threads wrapped around the centaur burned.

"Impossible! It's been treated several times with water spider oil!" Nikea cried out in alarm.

It seems the situation has turned for the worse.

I wonder if I can get rid of these threads wrapped around my sword with

Enchant.

Enchant

“Turn Me into a Blade!”

I called forth the black flames and cut off the threads.

“!? That’s... Impossible...” Nikea cried.

I cut off the rest of the threads even as I ended up cutting myself a bit.

Just as I managed to free myself, the spear of the centaur approached. I deflected it with my sword clad in black flames.

Looks like I really will have to kill this guy.

“Abominable... Humans!”

Those words seething with hate resounded right in front of me as the spear descended and clashed with my sword.

Chapter 107: Man-Eating Tiger IV

TI Note: There were some missed lines last chapter, please take a look at the notes at the end.

Status	
Race	Goblin
Level	37
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

I was stunned when our weapons clashed. The maddened centaur used that opportunity to quickly close our distance, bringing its scorching flames right in front of me.

—Damn it. Like this I can’t even get near it anymore.

Making the most out of our clashing weapons, I pushed the centaur back, then as I gathered ether into my arms, I repelled the centaur.

“Abominable... Human...” The maddened centaur seemed lost for a moment, as if it was hallucinating of a place not here. When it woke up, it came charging again. Its strength seemed endless. No matter how much I cut it, I just can’t seem to hurt it. I never thought this battle would be this difficult.

More and more fire burned as the centaur attacked, the temperature around it gradually rose until that annoying wall of fire came to view.

It seems the more I cut it, the longer it spends hallucinating. Technically, that's an opening I should be able to use, but the heat is making it hard to approach. Right... In other words, I can't do anything right now.

After being stunned for the umpteenth time and recovering, the centaur turned to me. "Filthy... Goblin..."

The centaur already looked no different from a blazing flame. The flames from inside the wounds I've cut could be seen wavering. How could someone turn into a monster like this?

Is it obsession? Or a terrifying grudge?

There is probably no one who hates the humans as much as this centaur.

—But even then... I won't lose.

If I withdraw from this fight, this mad monster would surely hurt the people following me. Besides, didn't I vow to destroy everything that blocked my path?

Gritting my molars, I held my long sword tight.

—Let's do this!

I glared at the enemy before me.

"GURURUUuAaAaAA!!" My World Devouring Howl signaled the start of my counterattack. Ether filled my legs as I kicked off against the ground and leaped like a beast.

The wall of flames approached.

Shield

"Let my body be inviolable!"

Black flames covered my body as I charged into the mouth of hell with my sword wielded to my right. The centaur's spear descended to greet me, but I stopped my body and dodged. The force behind that spear as it grazed me was like that of a huge tree.

—EnDurE iTTTt!

I gripped my sword as tight as I could to keep myself from trying to cover my face from the heat or run away from this hell. The spear only grazed me, but the force behind it caused blood to drip down my cheeks.

Still, I endured and stepped forward with my left foot with so much power it seemed I was trying to crush the ground.

Enchant

“Turn Me into a Blade!”

As soon as the centaur’s body came to view from beyond the flames, I let loose my sword from below!

“GYaaaAAga!” The centaur staggered.

Meanwhile, the centaur’s flames started to eat through my body the moment I canceled Shield. The heat was enough to drive me mad, but I endured it even as the oxygen around me burned up, sending slash after slash against the centaur.

“GYaaAGAGAAAaaaAAa!?”

—Still not enough!?

Again I struck with my sword, but when I stepped forward, something blocked one of my eyes. In the next moment, I felt the pain of heat, then my head swayed... Did I get hit!?

In that hell long past the point of ‘hot’, the heat quickly changed into pain.

As I staggered, the enemy reassumed its stance as it held its spear. It seems that’s what hit my face just now.

The pain of the heat coupled with the lack of air stopped me in my tracks.

Despite still staggering and still in pain, I forced myself to take a breath. When I looked up, I saw the centaur’s spear.

I’m going to lose, I thought. But as soon as I did, Reshia’s figure flashed through my mind.

—No, not yet!

I can’t lose!

I will win and take everything!

The Soul of the Berserk King awoke.

Pain and anguish seemed to vanish as the maddened soul of the berserk king

howled in fury.

“GURUuuaAaAa AaAAa!!”

The descending spear was flicked away as my sword met it, but by doing so, my sword finally broke. I threw it away. Only, two swords were left.

I looked at the enemy with the other half of my vision.

Black flames appeared from the base of my two swords, climbing up them as the black flames wrapped around their blades. At the same time, anger and battle intent screamed within my mind, demanding that I slay the enemy before me. My lips curved into a smile. It was the joy of battle, the happiness of dancing at the edge of death.

“GYaaARUAAaA!”

I met the descending burning spear with one sword. Naturally, I couldn’t win with just one hand, so the flaming sword struck down my sword along with my shoulders. The smell of burnt flesh filled my nose as I released that sword.

Joy tried to fill me, but I pushed it back to keep my sanity. I grit my teeth hard enough it seemed they would break, all in an effort to keep me from losing my mind.

The spear continued to burn my shoulders, but I ignored it and moved onwards with my remaining sword in my left hand.

“GURUuuuAAAaAAa!!”

The part the burning spear touched had already started to char, but still, I stepped onwards.

Pain ceased. I stopped even the black flames that sought to burst out of my wounds, gathering all of my power into my sword.

Enchant

“Turn Me into a Blade!”

From the left to the right, I swung my sword, cutting at the boundary that separated the human body from the horse. Like that the Man-Eating Tiger was cut with its flame.

Flames came pouring out of the upper human body as it fell along with its

lower horse body, but the flames were already starting to peter out.



“Why...” The man asked.

His life had long come to its end, his eyes hollowed, but still he mustered the last of his strength to turn to me and ask.

“Why... Can’t I win?”

The part I’d cut had already charred. The fact that he was still able to talk despite that showed just how miraculous his vigor was. It was as if his obsession wouldn’t let him die.

“I ate the corpses of my friends, I threw away... my pride... I became a demon... I lost everything, and yet... Why can’t I... win? Why can’t I... avenge my friends!”

Those words were the cry of a man who’d sworn vengeance. The cry of a man whose dreams were crushed.

I answered him. “Because my flame is still burning bright.”

If there was a difference between us, then it’s the difference in resolve. His decision to throw everything, to throw even himself away... If there was a difference, then that would be it.

“What does a goblin...” The man asked.

I replied. “I have a dream. A dream to one day conquer this world and everything in it.”

I buried my sword into the ground beside the man’s face.

“I won’t lose. I will take everything, the humans, the demihumans, even the elves... everything.”

The man looked shocked for a moment, his eyes opening wide. Just a little, he seemed to laugh.

“Big words... for a... goblin... But, I see... Before I knew it... I had... burned out...”

The man looked at his reflection on my sword that stood beside him as he

breathed his last.

Despair stood before him, but it was not despair that made him stop. It was he himself. He was the one who chose to give up.

The demihuman who stopped walking because of despair became a flame and burned away.

But I kept struggling and continue to do so until now. My flesh burned, I couldn't even breath, but still I walked onwards. That is why I won. Victory did not move my legs, but because I never stopped, I found victory.

“Farewell, demihuman of the flames.”

As I carved the image of the demihuman that burned with his despair into my mind, I left the place.

When I looked up, the hour of the night god had already passed, the body of the fire god hung from the sky once more, shining its light upon the world.



Level has risen.

37 => 45



Chapter 108: Entangling Threads

TI Note: There were some missed lines in chapter 106 (the chapter yesterday), please take a look at the notes at the end.

Status	
Race	Goblin
Level	45
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

“Now then, let us talk,” I said.

Nikea looked like she’d eaten a fly as she nodded.

“First of all, I shall have you keep your earlier promises,” I said.

“Of course, we will do as we promised,” Nikea said.

“I also want you to introduce me to the other descendants of the crystals.”

“...Why?”

“To make friends, of course, why else?”

“I wouldn’t know.”

The battered araneae was forced to acquiesce to my requests. As such, trade between the goblins and the araneae would begin, their village would have to

welcome my goblins, and Nikea herself would have to introduce me to the rest of the demihumans.

I'm sure Gi Za would reprimand me, saying I'm too soft, but it's really not a good idea to demand too much. Tribes that don't hold ill will to us goblins are precious. The araneae will serve as our foothold into the world of the demihumans. It wouldn't do to sour our relationship.

"That will be all," I said.

Nikea looked at me, confused.

"Is that really all?"

"Yes. Oh, there is one more thing."

"What?"

Nikea went full alert as soon as I said there was one more request.

"I would like to rest at your village tonight."

"...Oh, alright."

Nikea laughed a little when she saw me mischievously smiling.

After defeating the fiery demihuman, we headed back to the araneae village. When we got there, we were led to our lodging, where beds made out of spider threads greeted us. Shumea and Selenia immediately went to jump on them, leaving me dumbfounded. After that nothing unusual happened. Even the reaction of the araneae upon seeing us return looking exactly as if they'd seen ghost was just as expected.

From here on out is Nikea's job.

Will the araneae... Will Nikea keep her promise?

Tonight, I refrained from sleeping and kept watch for the goblins.

"Do you truly intend to trust them, Your Highness?" Gi Za asked.

I smiled. "I don't trust them yet. Everything will depend on their response. If the need arises, I don't mind making every araneae taste the bitterness of defeat."

“At that time, please let me lead the battle.”

They used wood for their pillars, while they used mud and threads for their walls. We sat before the entrance of our lodging.

Gi Ji Arsil prostrated himself before me. “I shall surely present the head of that araneae, Nikea, to you, Your Majesty.”

“Don’t rush. The way things are going, Nikea probably won’t become our enemy. If anything, she’s most likely to fight for us in the case something does happen,” I said.

“Against her own tribe?” The ferocious Gi Ba asked, to which I nodded.

Gi Ba and the other goblins of his generation were raised in an environment where all goblins were allies. He must have grown up thinking that those of the same race would never attack each other.

Gi Za and Gi Ji understood how the world worked, but Gi Do and the others could not.

“Your Highness, they live in the same village, surely they wouldn’t attack each other,” Gi Do fearfully said.

“The people unhappy with Nikea might not think so,” I said, but again Gi Do could not understand.

Gi Ba sneered. “Idiot.”

“You mean they would actually fight each other despite being of the same race?” Gi Do asked.

I touched my chin. “They don’t necessarily have to fight out in the open. They could just grumble. Weren’t there araneae who followed us this morning? That woman probably doesn’t have this whole village under control.”

“In other words, her enemies might ignore her words and attack us,” Gi Za said.

The other goblins nodded.

“Then which side will we pick?” Gi Ji asked.

I became thoughtful. “Hmm...”

Would Nikea really stay put even as her own tribesmen are killed? I'm sure she would choose them over us despite their differences.

"If Nikea bares her fangs at us, we will respond in kind."

As my heart ferociously laughed, a twisted smile rose upon my lips.



"Nikea of the hard crystal, do you truly intend on accepting them? They are goblins. You think such creatures are trustworthy?" One araneae said.

Up above at the tallest tree of the village was a vast hall made of threads, where the masters of the village gathered.

"Exactly, Nikea. Why is someone as wise as you unable to understand? Those goblins should be killed," another araneae said.

Voices of complaints rose one after another, but Nikea only calmly listened.

Of the people gathered, more than half of them were against the goblins. About 30% of those voiced their criticism loudly.

"..." Nikea quietly listened to those voices, then she turned to a single araneae. She asked. "Do you think the same, Nerou of the blue crystal?"

That araneae was young and overflowing with elegance. A smile appeared on his lips. "But of course, the goblins are filthy creatures."

The araneae was smiling though his eyes were filled with scorn.

Nikea quietly sighed.

Nerou was a skilled araneae with good blood. He was originally chosen to be the next chief, but Nikea became the chief instead. From then on he has curried favor with the other araneae, using them to try and seize the position of chief from Nikea.

Nerou never openly went against Nikea. Instead, he allowed others to criticize her, making sure he didn't do anything to disadvantage himself.

Cowardly bastard, Nikea thought. Her earlier attempts to capture the fiery demihuman was originally a plot to try and convince these people, but as a result, it only made things more difficult.

The goblins' request was by no means excessive.

At the very least, it was far better than the Nerou Faction's demand to kill the goblins.

The arguments went without any resolve, while Nikea only quietly waited. She waited patiently until they would finally give her an opportunity to speak her thoughts.

When the Nerou Faction, the Neutral Faction, and the small Nikea Faction were finally exhausted, Nikea spoke. "Hear me, descendants of the crystals. I have come to an agreement with them as your chief. To speak against that decision is a challenge to my authority as chief. Moreover—"

Nikea's dignity as chief made the araneae shudder.

"We, descendants of the crystals, came to be because of our trustworthiness and our righteousness. The goblins are here among us in our village precisely because they trust us. To attack them in their sleep, would that not shame our pride!?"

The Nerou Faction had no choice but to keep silent despite their frustrations. The Neutral Faction nodded as they talked among themselves. The members of the Nikea Faction were all smiling, delighted at the greatness of their chief.

"That is all. If there is nothing else, this meeting will be adjourned."

The first to stand up were the Nerou Faction, who left posthaste, followed by the Neutral Faction. The Nikea Faction stayed behind and gathered around Nikea.

"Chief, are you sure this is the right choice?" One of them asked.

"Everything should be fine as long as we don't pull anything. It's just that..." Nikea replied.

"It's just that?" One of them asked.

"If a war breaks out, we will surely lose," Nikea solemnly said.

The members of the Nikea faction looked at each other.

"But..." One of them tried to argue.

“Did you see that goblin? The big black one.”

Nikea’s voice was gentle, as if to guide them. Her gaze was gentle, much like a mother, as she looked at the araneae who was like a younger brother to her.

“Yes,” he said.

“That is their king. He fought the Man-Eating Tiger by himself and won. And those goblins under him. What do you think of them?”

“There were all sorts...”

“Yes, the goblins reproduce quickly. So quickly, in fact, that it’s terrifying. More than likely, their main force is waiting somewhere. If a war breaks out, that army would come marching to our doorsteps. Individually, we might have the upper hand, but numerically? They would overwhelm us.”

The araneae were speechless at their chief’s predictions.

“We have to work with them. This is the only way for our tribe to survive,” Nikea said.

The members of her faction all fearfully nodded.

Chapter 109: Poison

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	45
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

In the black of the night, spider threads landed on the ground. I thought the only thing I had to worry about were the humans and the elves, but it seems I’ll have to look over the reports on the araneae again.

Did I trust Nikea too much?

Araneae fell from the ceiling, wielding short spears, but the shaman, Gi Za Zakuend’s, wind took their weapons away. And when they landed on the ground, the ferocious Gi Ba was waiting for them with his three normal goblins.

The araneae screamed as the normal goblins attacked their legs while Gi Ba cut off their arms. There was another araneae approaching from another corner, but Gi Ji Arsil quickly dealt with it with a blow from behind.

“Goblin boss!” Shumea said.

“Stand back,” I replied.

There was a secret battle occurring right now in this huge lodging of ours.

The darkness didn't matter much to us goblins, but to the humans and the elves, it was a huge disadvantage. I had Shumea and Selena hide behind me. The araneae that approached them were dealt with by the wind mage, Gi Do's, wind bullets.

"Quite the enthusiastic welcome we have here, Your Majesty," Gi Za said.

I chuckled. "Let us receive them with hospitality then!"

Leaving the approaching araneae from the flanks to my subordinates, I dealt with the araneae before me with a single blow. A closer look at the fallen araneae showed a faint light coming from the area around their eyes.

"Moss?"

I touched it and then examined the glowing moss on my fingers. They were well prepared.

It seems Nikea failed to convince the araneae.

"Try not to kill. I want to know who's behind them," I said as I kicked the dying spider.

The goblins wordlessly nodded, reminding me again of how reliable they were.

Well, then... Just how much of the araneae have become hostile, I wonder.

I pondered on the situation as I conserved my strength.



"Chief!" An araneae cried.

That cry was enough to make the entire Nikea faction turn. Nikea drew cold sweat as soon as she saw the desperate expression on the araneae's face.

"The Nerou Faction attacked the goblins!" The araneae said.

"Impossible!" Nikea said as she immediately ran past the messenger and looked down to the goblins' lodging from the tallest tree in the village. Hope and despair mingled within her. Perhaps the messenger was mistaken, or then again, perhaps the worst has happened. She didn't want to look, but her eyes were still drawn to the lodging.

“Nerou...”

Nikea watched the goblins’ lodging as she unconsciously grit her teeth. There were araneae clinging to the roof. When the araneae kicked open the door of the lodging, an araneae was thrown out from inside. The araneae was covered in lacerations, one of its arms was missing, while several of its legs had been cut. When Nikea saw that, she ran faster. She used her eight legs to run vertically down the trees, swinging from tree to tree with her spider threads.

As she quickly approached the ground, she saw from the corner of her eyes the goblins exiting their lodging and her brethren attacking them.

“Sto—” Nikea tried to say, but before she could finish that sentence, her brethren were cut down by blades of wind. By the time she felt the ground pushing against her legs, her brethren were already on the floor, bleeding as they crawled.

“...Ku.”

The battle was decided in the time it took her to land. That was how short the battle was. Despite their powerful bodies, her brethren were defeated just like that.

Those araneae on the ground might not have been warriors, but they were still araneae.

The araneae was one of the physically stronger among the demihumans, and yet... The goblins were beyond them.

How did the goblins defeat them?

She thought hard, trying to find an answer, but in the end, no answer came.

“Don’t move,” a voice sharply said just as she was about to stop the goblins from attacking any further.

“You’re... Gi Ji, yes? I’m not your enemy. Please believe me,” Nikea said.

“That is for the king to decide,” Gi Ji nonchalantly said, though some of his hidden emotions still leaked.

Gi Ji regretted not killing Nikea back when they were dealing with that fiery demihuman. If only he had killed her then, they wouldn’t be in this situation

now. Gi Ji's emotions became a mess as he thought that.

The king's orders were absolute. Any goblin who served the king knew this. But what if... what if one must disobey the king for his sake? Wouldn't it be the greatest display of loyalty to serve the king even if one must earn his reprove?

"Let me speak with your king then," Nikea said.

It was almost as if she spoke to stop him from thinking anything unnecessary. Gi Ji shook when he heard her voice, the thoughts he was thinking just now quickly vanishing.

"Fine, but you better not pull anything, or else..." Gi Ji warned.

"Thank you." Nikea said.

Gi Ji led Nikea into their lodging as he kept his blade on her.

Nikea went pale when she saw the scene inside. Several araneae were on the ground, unconscious; each and every single one of them were young. They were all either members of the Nerou Faction or the Neutral Faction.

Nerou must have either tempted or threatened them. Regardless, they were deeply wounded. Like this even more the goblins' hands would be tainted with even more blood. As Nikea thought that, chills ran up her.

She never thought there was this much of a difference between their races. Nikea's legs almost quivered. The goblins' lodging was big, but it didn't take long before she stood before the king.

"I deeply apologize for this incident," Nikea said.

"Didn't you say there wouldn't be a next time?" Gi Za asked.

Nikea could tell from the corner of her eyes that he was smiling, but she kept her eyes on the king.

There was no one here who would go against the king's words. As long as the king forgave her, even this goblin would have no choice but to let her off.

Gradually, impatience filled her, so much so that it felt like her chest was on fire as she waited for the king to speak. It wasn't just her though, as even Gi Za couldn't keep waiting and asked.

“Your Highness, you wouldn’t mind if I took some of these living araneae, would you?” He brazenly asked in front of Nikea.

When he was about to lay a hand on the fallen araneae, the king finally spoke, “Stop it, Gi Za.”

Gi Za clearly looked unhappy, but the king avoided his gaze.

“Lord Nikea,” the king said.

There was a majesty and power to his gaze.

“Yes,” Nikea said.

“I’ll get straight to the point, how will you make up for this mess?”

Nikea didn’t know what it would take to receive the king’s pardon. She didn’t have time to know either, as the fallen araneae were inching closer and closer to death by the second, so she gave the most she could offer.

“We shall treat the demon children of chaos the same way we treat the elves. We shall treat ^{you} as ^{and} guests of honor.”

To save the young of the village was the chief’s greatest duty. They might have erred tonight, forming factions among themselves and fighting a foolish battle, but in time, surely they too would one day grow up.

“I grow uncertain whether you are truly capable of keeping such promises, Lord Nikea. Know that just as you treasure the people of your village, I too treasure my goblins. I hope you understand that.”

“I do... understand.”

It takes power to unite a tribe.

The king’s words deeply resonated with Nikea. She was a proud araneae who swore to lead her tribe according to her own ideals. There was no future under the leadership of the old-fashioned araneae like Nerou who relied on their lineage.

It was because of that that she became chieftain.

And yet... the reality before her now was this.

Under Nerou's sedition, the araneae attacked the goblins whom they have received as guests. Exactly, who was the filthy race here?

"Very well," the king said.

"Your Majesty!" Gi Za cried, but the king shook his head.

"I will trust you, Lord Nikea," the king said. "But this truly will be the last. If anything else happens after this, we shall welcome the araneae not as friends but as slaves."

"At that time, I shall give you my life."

In any case, with this the goblins have shown their good will.

Their king wished for them to live together as equals.

"Then if you'd excuse me, there is somewhere I need to be."

After Nikea felt the sword pointed at her be drawn back, she left. The wounded araneae needed to be treated as soon as possible.

She selected the sensible from her faction and sent them to the goblins' lodging.

But there was yet work to be done.

Sharp talons came out of Nikea's fingertips as the hair on her legs angrily stood up in the green hue of poison.



The araneae glanced fearfully at the goblins from time to time as they carried their wounded out of the lodging. When they were all gone, Gi Za blew up.

"Soft, soft! Too soft, Your Highness!" He said.

"Don't get so mad," I said, wryly smiling.

Even Gi Ji who usually kept his thoughts to himself spoke. "Please pardon me for this, Your Majesty, but I do believe that you were being too soft."

It seems they really do think that I was too soft. But is that really the case?

"Do you really think Nikea will be able to quietly take control of this village?" I asked, but the goblins just looked puzzled.

I explained. “Judging from the way Nikea acted a while ago, it should be safe to assume that she doesn’t have full control of this village.”

The noble class goblins nodded.

I continued. “Moreover, the people going against her are quite influential. They disobeyed her for the second time, after all.”

The first was when those two araneae followed us. The second is this recent incident.

“Now, let me ask you a question. What would you do to avoid any future troubles?” I asked.

“...Are you saying this was all meant to incite discord?” Gi Za asked.

I nodded. “With this we’ll be able to watch from the sidelines as they eat each other up.”

“Weren’t you planning to receive the descendants of the crystals as friends?” Selena timidly asked in hushed voices, but there was anger reflected upon her eyes.

The goblins all turned to her when she spoke. As soon as they did, the elf hid behind Shumea. Although she’d gotten quite friendly, it seems she didn’t really respect me.

“Right, as friends,” I said. “But whether they value that proposition is something they will be proving from now on.”

Will they take my hand? Or will they bare their fangs?

“But, well...”

Friends would be best. I’ll even support her a little. Time is limited. Who knows how far this forest stretches? The more friends we have, the stronger we will be.

“As expected of our king,” Gi Za said.

I wryly smiled. “Let us prepare then.”

“Prepare?” Shumea suspiciously asked.

My wry smile grew bigger. “If they intend to be friends, it wouldn’t hurt to

gain their favor. And if they intend to fight, then we should get rid of them as soon as possible.”

“Boss, you’re not the honest type, huh,” Shumea chuckled as she patted Selena on the head.

We got an araneae to lead us out of our lodging.



Gi Za’s level has risen.

43 => 45

Gi Do’s level has risen.

60 => 63

Gi Ji’s level has risen.

3 => 7

Gi Ba’s level has risen.

1 => 10



Chapter 110: Old Blood, New Blood

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	45
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

“Oh, if it isn’t the esteemed chief. To what do we owe the honor of this visit?”

The man responsible behind the anti-Nikea sentiments, Nerou, lived in the western part of the village. The lands he owned were vast, being someone whose lineage traced back to many generations. The fact he lived in the western part, closest to the elves who were also in the same direction, was proof of his proud araneae blood.

This arrangement of the araneae village was because of the deep gratitude they felt to the elves, who quickly responded to them in their darkest hour. Their decision to live atop trees strung together by their threads was also because of their gratitude.

The Nerou Estate was built up slowly over the years, each tree carefully planted. The precise gap between each tree was proof of just how powerful and deep Nerou’s lineage went.

“You should know why I’m here,” Nikea said.

Despite those dangerous words, Nerou sneered back. “You came because of the goblins, I suppose.”

“Obviously!” Nikea angrily said.

Nerou calmly spoke. “I don’t understand why you treat them so favorably, but...”

Nerou’s followers neared him to speak out words of complaints in accordance to Nerou’s own thoughts.

“Why did you let them into this village?” Said one.

“Do you see those disgusting things as equals of us proud descendants of the crystals!? You must be insane!” Said another.

Nikea’s followers spoke back against the jeers.

“If you don’t want to obey the chief, leave!” Said one of Nikea’s followers.

When it seemed like a battle of words would begin, Nikea ordered them to stop.

“Stop,” she said.

Although she spoke only a little louder than normal, for someone like her who rarely spoke from the start, those words carried a power that was enough to silence her faction.

“What!? Are you unable to respond now that the truth has come to light? After all, you’re nothing more than a commoner without a drop of noble blood!” Said another member of Nerou’s faction.

The members of Nerou’s faction kept adding oil to the flames, so much so that even Nerou felt that things were getting out of hand.

“Wait, I think that’s going a bit too—” Nerou tried to stop them, but even he could not stop his own faction from spouting insults at their chief.

It was around this time that he saw a shadow from the corner of his eyes.

It was Nikea. By the time Nerou saw the color of her talons, one of his follower’s head had already fallen.

It was unfortunate, but they had forgotten one terrifying fact. The chief that

stood before them was in fact a distinguished warrior of their tribe. It was easy to forget with Nikea's quiet personality, but her power was the real thing, such that she was even known by a second name: Poison Feather.

"It doesn't matter if they curse at me... They will all be dying tonight, anyway." Nikea's voice was colder than ice as she attacked Nerou and his followers. She was not one to let slip an opening. Her talons which she killed with, dripped with poison, a kind of poison that could paralyze.

"Nikea..." Nero tried to say something, but Nikea, who seemed to have lost all emotions, nonchalantly spoke over him.

"The goblins were attacked just now. You should have never tricked our young, Nerou. To forsake one's duty and use his own family as pawns... That is a sin too grave to pardon."

Nikea glared at Nerou's followers, and they quickly turned away. Nerou turned around and sighed for a moment before looking Nikea in the eye.

"Do you know your mistake, Nerou of the blue crystal?" Nikea asked.

"I suppose..."

He seemed to have resigned himself, but when he shook his head, his followers tried to step in. Only, they were stopped by Nikea's glare.

"...But I share my faction's stance. I am against allying with the goblins."

Nikea's brows rose when she heard this man actually speak out his own opinion.

"We should live peacefully in the forest," Nerou said. "But you, who is as passionate as fire, keeps trying to lead us down a different path. That goblin is the same, I'm sure... We are the defeated. The gods have already abandoned us," Nerou said.

"No, we aren't over yet! There isn't a parent in this world who does not love his own child!" Nikea passionately said.

"It's ironic," Nerou laughed. "In the end, it was fresh blood, like yourself, who was blessed with the araneae spirit."

Nerou's followers were speechless as he cast his eyes downward. It was a first for him to expose his emotions so clearly. Usually, he was always smiling and at leisure, never truly stressed or anguished, but in the end, that mask backfired on him, and he lost the position of chief to Nikea.

"But it's too late now... I suppose I should have talked with you properly once." Nerou said as he noticed the black goblin from a distance.

"Indeed... I too regret that," Nikea said.

The bitter smile that rose upon Nerou's lips was as elegant as ever.

Suddenly, Nikea's arms swung and Nerou's head fell.

Shortly after, his nearby followers' heads also fell.

"Bi—" One of the remaining followers tried to scream out, but an araneae of the Nikea Faction threw a spear at him before he could. With his throat pierced, he was powerless to stop Nikea.

Nikea's arms dripped with poison as they swung like feathers. Standing with four of her legs, she used the other four to shoot threads at the enemy, while the poison dripped from her finger tips onto the threads to paralyze them.

Renowned as Poison Feather, Nikea was a skilled araneae warrior whom even her own tribe feared.

After suppressing everyone around her, she took Nerou's freshly severed head.

"...Pitiful Nerou, your sacrifice won't be in vain. I will restore our glory. One day, the light shall once again shine upon us, descendants of the crystals."

As she gently closed her eyes, she kissed Nerou's freshly severed head, then she turned to her faction.

"The leader of the traitors has been executed! Judgment will be passed upon the remaining colluders!"

The araneae prostrated themselves before the ground in response to the chief's authority.

"This issue is settled. From here on out, any disrespect to our guests will not

be forgiven.”

With this Nikea had finally taken complete control of the village.



I watched as Nikea took down the leader of the traitors.

“It seems they’ve reached a conclusion,” I said.

“Mu... That’s no fun,” Gi Ba complained as he fiddled with his sword.

“Hmm... I seem to have unjustly looked down on that woman,” Gi Za thoughtfully said with a difficult expression.

“With this they won’t attack us anymore, right?” Shumea nonchalantly asked.

“Most likely,” I nodded. “Well, in any case, this is one problem solved,”

Shumea smiled as she rubbed Selena’s head. “That’s a good thing, right, Boss?”

Right, after all, with this we’ve successfully made friends with a tribe, giving us a foothold in the west.

As we were talking among ourselves, Nikea approached, carrying the enemy’s head in her hands. Her eyes seemed to be wet with tears.

“King of Goblins, with this we’ve shown you our sincerity.”

“That you have. From here on our races shall be friends.”

Nodding, Nikea calmly walked away. The intimidating aura she emanated caused even Gi Ji, who carried much animosity toward her, to back off.

“What will you be doing with that head?” I asked.

“If you ask for it, I could give it to you, but... The people of the village are my family. I would like to mourn for him.”

Her hands, dyed in the blood of her own family, carefully lifted up the head of the traitor.

“I see... Do that then.”

“Thank you.”

As she vanished into the distance, Selena muttered, “She looked really sad.”

Nikea’s vanishing back seemed to carry a great burden.

It was as if it was saying she could no longer stop. For if she stopped even a moment, she would surely be crushed.



Lately, Gastra’s been bringing all sorts of things.

From kittens to pups, even the adult dogs trained in the army, or the white tiger cubs that were raised for royalty.

Miss Lili says we should properly discipline him, but we’re still talking about it.

Well, the animals he brings back are cute, so I guess it’s fine, but his lack of boundaries is really surprising.

Reshia thought to herself as she held Gastra and looked at the figure sitting before her.

“Lady Reshia, rumors of your person have been spreading quite far lately.”

Exchanges such as this have been occurring a lot lately.

While it was well and good that word of her healing people had spread, she was essentially under house arrest, only able to go out to town once a month and only with an escort of guards. A few days ago, she tried going to the orphanage without permission, but as a result, people spoke ill of King Ashtal.

From then on, she’s been kept under tight watch. Then as if the influential merchants and nobles were waiting for this opportunity, they had meetings with her scheduled.

From what she’s heard it seems they paid a good sum of money just to meet her.

—I’m not something to be shown around though.

Despite feeling embarrassed, she played along anyway and paid attention to the merchant before her. But with the conversation going nowhere, she couldn’t help but sigh.

The merchant noticed that, so he changed the topic.

“By the way, Lady Reshia, have you heard of the scarlet maiden?”

“No, I’m not privy to the rumors outside the castle.”

The merchant was elated to see Reshia show some interest, so he shared the rumors he’s heard.

The scarlet maiden was a knight who could use the cursed sword of the royal family.

The scarlet maiden would soon be appointed holy knight.

The scarlet maiden would become a grand hero in the footsteps of the great hero, Gulland.

The scarlet maiden would appear in the battlefield and rake in achievement after achievement.

“She sounds amazing,” Reshia said.

“Indeed. In fact, there are plenty of rumors going around that she’s going to become holy knight soon. It seems she would be sent to the north as well to quell the bandits,” the merchant said.

Come to think of it, Reshia thought, she hasn’t been seen Lili lately because of some business she had to do in the north. They haven’t met for two weeks already, in fact. It seems King Ashtal had something he wanted her to deliver.

Reshia hated the fact that she couldn’t openly go against King Ashtal.

She sighed at the short ceiling above her that cut her off from the vast blue sky.

Chapter 111: Merchant

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	45
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv20); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

The different demihuman tribes lived in their own villages in their own lands within the forest.

“Greetings, I am the King of the Goblins.”

Kneeling before me was a member of the winged ones. There was much distance between the countless villages of the demihumans; going to and fro a village could not be done in a short time.

The first problem the demihumans needed to deal with to create their republic was the communication between their villages.

Their solution was this merchant before me, the winged ones.

“It’s an honor to meet you, Your Highness. I am Yushika, a member of the tribe of the winged ones.”

Harpies

By chance, a merchant happened to pass by the araneae village, so I asked Nikea to introduce me.

The harpies were a nomadic race responsible for bridging communication between the various demihumans. They were also merchants responsible for distributing various special goods.

For example, the threads of the araneae, the fangs produced by the Werewolves Fang Tribe, the jewels mined by the Rizalats Long-Tailed Tribe, the wooden crafts of the Papirsag Shell Tribe, or the iron works of the Centaurs Man-Horse Tribe. The various demihuman tribes traded their special goods for the other tribes' special goods.

Other than those tribes, there's also the Tarpidae Mud-Scaled Tribe, who can go to places the harpies can't easily reach with their wings, or the eccentric Minotaurs Man-Bull Tribe.

"Likewise," I nodded. "I believe there'll be plenty of opportunities for us to work together."

"More customers is always a pleasure," she smiled, bowing as she bent the white wings behind her back and the talons of her feet. The way she carefully held the bag dangling from her chest with her two arms reminded me of a mother holding her baby.

"By the way, Your Highness," she said. "How far do you intend to go?"

Her smile quickly changed into one of cunningness.

"If you'd like I could show you the way," she said.

But then Nikea suddenly interjected. "Don't tease our guest too much, first feather of the descendants of the crystal."

Nikea looked intimidating with her arms folded and her brows furrowed.

"You surprised me," Yushika said. "I didn't think the araneae seriously intended to be their friends."

"We are faithful to our words... King of Goblins, I advise you not to trust her too much. Her kind is known to play mischief on people."

It seems she was planning on leading us astray.

"Oh? That would be troubling," I said.

“...For the record, I still am the chief of the harpies,” Yushika said when she sensed my displeasure. “In any case, as I mentioned awhile ago, I’ll deliver anything you want delivered as long as proper compensation is given.”

Yushika sweetly smiled as she left my side.

“I would like to hold the Eight-Flag Meeting. Can you send word to the other tribes?” Nikea said.

“...Hasn’t Gurfia’s dream ended?” Yushika asked.

The demihuman of the flames... His name was Gurfia.

“I haven’t given up yet. Compensation has also been paid. I’m not backing off,” Nikea insisted.

“If you insist,” Yushika said. “We have to think of a countermeasure anyway, and there’s also the matter afterwards...” Yushika said. After which she turned to me to bid goodbye, then she spread her big white wings and flew away.

Riding on the strong gales of the skies, she flew up above, beyond the tall trees of the village, and then in the blink of an eye, her figure became as small as an ant’s.

“Harpy, huh,” I muttered.

Gi Za could fly temporarily, but only temporarily. A long flight is impossible. The harpies’ ability to fly is indeed a unique skill.

What a fortunate thing it would be if I could annex all of the demihumans.



There were 8 days until the meeting of the demihumans could begin. Apparently, according to the harpy, Yushika’s, report, it would take that long for everyone to gather, so I took the opportunity and went on a walk with my goblin subordinates.

Speaking of which, I sent Gi Ji Arsil back to the fortress to call for more goblins. It took much effort to acquire the araneae village, so it only makes sense that I strengthen it.

After sending Gi Ji, a young araneae by the name of Rukenon led us outside

the village.

“What beasts lurk around here?” I asked.

But then Gi Za suddenly spoke. “I have some business I’d like to deal with.”

The goblin seemed to have something on mind, so we left him and continued on with our guide.

The nemesis of the araneae, the rock frogs, and the blood-sucking butterflies were renowned as fiendish beasts, but aside from those, it seems there weren’t a lot of high level beasts lurking the area anymore.

The demihumans have been hunting most of the threats in the surrounding area, so as a result, there were barely any left now. It’s only natural, I suppose. It would be much easier to live in an area if there were no threats, after all.

The rocky frogs had tawny skin covered with a slippery membrane. They usually moved groups, so when we came across one, there was an army with it.

There were two big rocky frogs leading the army of rocky frogs. I noticed there were several among them with tails about the size of one’s palm.

When I asked about it, I found out that those rocky frogs with tails were the younger ones. Apparently, the tails were extremely nutritious and delicious.

I spurred on my subordinate goblins as I used this opportunity to train them.

Cynthia, who was sitting on my shoulders, also seemed excited, but when she fought the little rocky frogs, she had a hard time.

Did I spoil her too much?

Well, it should be fine as long as I have her hunt by herself for a while.

Thinking that, I let Cynthia hunt by herself. I told the other goblins not to help her out too.

We were already cleaning up by the time Cynthia finally managed to defeat a baby rocky frog and brought its corpse before me. The ones who dealt with the two big rocky frogs were Gi Do, Gi Ba, and the three normal goblins under Gi Ba.

I distributed the best parts of the meat to them.

The normal goblins under Gi Ba will evolve soon. It’s good that they’re

growing well, but what should I do about their names?



I thought I could finally put my heart at ease after that scary goblin left, but... sigh.

After fixing the village the humans attacked, we started work on its expansion.

“Bui, where to put this?”

Since that day, the other orcs have been seeing me in a new light. As expected, a strong leader like Master Gol Gol is a ray of hope to them.

When I was about to walk over to where Gui and the others were, a voice called from under me.

“Food,” a kobold said as it bit on my legs.

“It hurts, Hasu!” I cried.

“Not for me. Food!” Hasu said.

You’re missing the point! And didn’t I just feed you a triple boar awhile ago!?

When that scary goblin told me he would give me the southern area, I agreed after weighing the risks against the profits. Thanks to that, we were able to secure this bountiful lake, which greatly increased our food supplies. The only threats in the area were the giant spiders, but we could easily deal with them by having several orcs work together just like that goblin does.

Everything was going well... Except for one thing!

When I went south, I met these kobolds who are biting my feet now.

They were originally under the care of that goblin, so I was planning on taking care of them in his stead, but when I saw their leader, Hasu, I instantly got the feeling that she was someone I wouldn’t be able to deal with.

The moment we met, her eyes sparkled and her mouth dripped with saliva.

According to the food chain, I’m supposed to be above her, but for some reason, I couldn’t deal... No, to be honest, I find her really scary!

I gave them a little bit of food when we first met, but she wasn't satisfied, so she got her friends to circle around us, and they barked at us to give them food. It was so scary! I thought I was going to be traumatized!

I told them I didn't have any food and made a run for it, but they followed me!

The other orcs saw me, but they just laughed, saying, "Hah! Are you serving the kobolds now, Bui? As expected of our great leader!"

They think this is a joke, but considering how strong this kobold seems, this is actually dangerous!

I'm not really sure why, but I keep imagining this thing stronger than me.

It's not all bad though, I admit. The kobolds report to us as long as we feed them, and the information they bring helps us hunt better.

"Bui, stop playing with the kobolds and help!" One of the orcs who evolved in the last battle, Gui, yelled.

"Food!" The kobolds cried as they bit me.

To be honest, it doesn't really hurt, but mentally speaking it's really scary.

"I have some beans here..." I said.

"Meat!" They demanded as they whipped the beans away with their tails.

I scratched my head, not knowing what to do with these selfish kobolds. In the end, I decided to take out some emergency rations I had with me. It was a paltry amount, but Hasu sunk her teeth into it anyway even though she whipped them away at first with her tail. When I saw her take the bait, I ran away.

We're in the middle of expanding the village. With plenty of food and no enemies to threaten us, our race naturally flourished. Our females could birth several babies at a time. They're not like the females of the goblins who could only birth one at a time. Our females could birth even 10 babies at the same time.

Babies, small orcs that could fit the palm of one's hand. After 60 days, their fangs would sprout, and they would become full-fledged adults.

We grow a lot slower compared to the goblins, and our females need to rest for a year after giving birth, so we can't reproduce as fast.

Regardless, I think babies are cute.

If all the babies grow up, we won't be able to fit in the village anymore. That's why we're expanding. Everyone agreed too, so I'm not just forcing my opinion on others. On top of expanding, we're also changing the position of the ditch and strengthening the fence, so when the humans come attack we'll be able to defend. We're also digging pitfalls just like the goblins did in the past.

Master Gol Gol would send an orc east whenever one was born, but I don't think that's very effective. If I did that to a newborn orc, it might just end up biting me in the heel. Besides, if that scary goblin were to find a new orc village, he would probably just destroy it.

So that leaves two choices.

I could keep expanding this village or send a small group of orcs to found a new village. They'll have to be very small, so they don't pick a fight with me later, though.

Right now, we have lots of food, so there shouldn't be any problem raising more orcs. One day, though, a new force might rise among our ranks, who will lead the younger orcs.

I need to ensure that the orcs grow up accustomed to living together as a horde.

If I show them the benefits of living together, such as the efficiency of hunting together or the benefits of structures we could build together, I'm sure they would naturally prefer living together as one horde.

"Gui, let's move that tree's roots to this rock over here. And Goi, please mow the area near Doralia."

When I turned around after giving orders, I saw something horrifying.

It was Hasu.

...It seems peace is still but a far-fetched dream.



Gi Ba's level has risen.

10 => 18

Gi Do's level has risen.

63 => 67

Cynthia's level has risen.

20 => 30

Chapter 112: Scarlet Maiden

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	45
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv30); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

I spent the days until the meeting either hunting or talking to Nikea.

Most of it was me trying to convince her to allow the goblins free passage. Originally, we wanted to expand, but with no contact in the west, the path to the elves couldn’t be maintained.

There’s also the war with the humans. It’s necessary to have free passage, so as to easily be able to muster troops from the demihumans. I used the threat of the humans to swing her opinion to my side. I told her of their great influence, of how they cut down the forest, and of how strong their country was.

Nikea’s expression gradually changed for the worse.

“The human threat is real. It would be best to work with me.” I was like a serpent whispering at her ears.

Except for that one incident with Gene, Nikea and her people haven’t crossed swords with the humans for over a hundred years. At that time, they lost countless times because of their failure to unite themselves, only winning once

at the end.

But now, a threat greater than that approaches.

“If it weren’t for us, goblins, the humans would have already reached you,” I said.

That was no more than a prediction, but it was most likely what would have happened. That human commander was really greedy for more land.

“...It’s hard to believe all these all of the sudden,” Nikea said.

“Then you should see for yourself what has happened to the east. Selena can speak for us too. She saw our battle with the humans.”

Nikea turned to Selena, a member of the elven race whom the demihumans held in esteem. “Is this true?”

Selena nodded and Nikea’s brows furrowed.

“We have spent the past decades, bridging the gap between our races. We had to, lest we wished to invite a rebellion. Yet it seems the humans won’t even let us do that,” Nikea sorrowfully said as she closed her eyes. “King of Goblins, what is it that you wish of us?”

Filled with resolve, she looked me in the eyes.

“I wish to borrow the strength of the descendants of the crystals to create my country,” I answered.

“You want us to fight as your soldiers?” Nikea asked.

“To fight with us, side-by-side as friends, not as slaves. I have no intentions of harming you. I only wish to defeat the humans and build up my country.”

“Please give me time to think.”

The impending threat of the humans was inevitable. They would have to face them eventually, one way or another, and to go against them alone was a fool’s errand. Of course, there was always the possibility of the demihumans uniting themselves to battle the humans, but... the odds of that happening were exceedingly low.

—Because Gurfia’s dream has long ended.

The centaur who once tried to unite the demihumans was corrupted by the very humans he sought to destroy, and in the end, burned up in his own flames. Ever since then, the demihumans have been floating aimlessly, not knowing what to do with their incomplete union.

It was at such a time that we came, the mighty goblins of the east.

Nikea knows that the goblins are stronger than the demihumans.

The hate of the demihumans is the real deal. That araneae's hate toward Shumea wasn't just for show. Hence, there is no way the demihumans would ever accept defeat in the humans' hands.

Nikea will have to make a choice. Whether to rely on the demihumans' failed republic... or me.

Someone as smart as her should already know, yet she still asks to be given time to think. Is it because of her disdain for the goblins that she is unable to accept the truth? Or because of her pride as a demihuman?

Regardless, I have given my proposition. What happens next is up to her.

Standing up from my seat, I called out to the goblins who did not join the hunt for the day.

If she does refuse, the goblins summoned from the fortress will have work to do.



Atop snowy plains where cold winds blew were flowers of red.

As red as the hair of that valiant female knight who stood alone at the center of it all.

"GURUuUUu." Snow wolves growled as they approached her.

Behind the snow wolves was a barbarian, riding on a white elephant as he charged toward her. That white elephant was about three times the woman's height. It had sharpened ivories for tusks, but even without them, the weight of that white elephant was enough to crush the woman flat.

Despite that, the woman calmly stood in its path.

Her red hair swayed under the blow of the cold winds.

As her breath turned white, she quietly uttered a few words.

Slash

“Tear them apart, tail of the serpent.”

The weapon in her hands shook. It was shaped like a whip, but it was definitely a sword. The sound of metal resounded as the consolidation of countless blades swung. Yes, that was none other than the cursed sword of the royal family, the Vashinant.

Vashinant

Wolves came at the female knight from both of her sides. Vashinant turned to them. The instant they leapt, true to its name, Sky-Splitter literally tore through the sky. In a stroke, two new flowers bloomed on the snow-white plains, and then the woman pointed Vashinant at the white elephant before her.

“RURUuRARARAAIII!” The barbarian cried out as he charged on elephantback toward the red-haired knight. He held a throwing spear in his hands, but he could not throw it in time, for the same sword that cut the snow wolves in half pierced him from the back. In the same moment, blood gushed out from the elephant’s feet.

A thunderous sound erupted as the white elephant fell to the ground. The man on its back, half-dead, spoke only one word before blood gushed out and his head came off.

“Diablo...” That was the man’s last word.

Wiping the blood off her, the female knight called back the swords that were gathered around her like a coiling snake, and then she swung her blade, bringing it back to its normal shape.

“Diablo, huh.”

Lili’s voice disappeared into the cold winds.



Yggdrasill

In the seemingly endless winter of the snow god’s mountain, up in the northern borders of the Germion Kingdom, were an endless war and the barbarians known as Yugushiva.

The hero, Gulland, was dispatched to the ever despairing north with his soldiers in hopes of quelling the unending war. But his soldiers alone could not fight a battle. They needed weapons, food, and a place to rest.

The country decided to supply those things through a colonial city known as Colonia, which both acted as the soldiers' place of rest and a fortress that protected them from their enemies. Naturally, it was well defended, being something which exerted much pressure on the region.

The roads of the city stretched on endlessly, tearing through where there were forests and passing over as bridges where there were waters. Built up by the blood and sweat of countless men, these roads were humanity's pride.

In pursuit of self-sufficiency, fences made out of wood around the region, as if to demarcate the boundaries which separated the lesser from the greater. The colonial city was a sight so stunning anyone who saw it for the first time would gasp.

That was especially so for the descendants of the other races, who would find their hometowns shameful when compared to the glory of this colonial city.

It was in that very city that Lili visited a farmer's family.

"I'm back," she said.

"Welcome home. You're not hurt, right?" Bern and Neumann said.

They were both humans Lili once lived with in the village of the king. After Lili patted the snow off her overcoat, she smiled at them.

"Yes, I take it nothing's changed here either?" Lili said.

"Everything's as usual... For better or for worse," Neumann bitterly smiled, while Bern scratched his head and apologized.

"I'm sorry," Lili said. "I thought I'd be able to help, but..."

After they were rescued from the goblin village with Reshia, King Ashtal sent them all over the country to different colonial cities. Chinos was sent to the east, Mattis to the south, while Bern and Neumann were sent to the north. The others too were sent to various different places. Everyone was sent somewhere different.

In fact, Bern and Neumann were also sent to different places. It just so happened that Neumann, who was stationed near the capital, pined for Lili, and Bern, who became a soldier to keep his family from starving, was sent to the cruel cold of the north.

After Lili heard of their wretched situation after they delivered a package to Gulland, Lili dropped by to check on them. From then on, she would visit them whenever she went to the north.

Recently, Lili has asked them to investigate the source of the rumors surrounding her.

Though Lili still hasn't given her answer, after King Ashtal revealed to her the history of her lineage and asked her to serve the country, rumors meant to help her ascension to the rank of holy knight had been spreading as if they were true.

"It's fine. If it's to support my family, a little hardship is nothing," Bern said.

"Ah, Lili!" Mill said, sweeping away the solemn atmosphere.

"That's Miss Lili to you," Bern reprimanded.

"It's alright. I don't mind," Lili said.

Mill had always been a mischievous boy even back during their time in the village. That hasn't changed even now.

"Hey, hey, did you bring some candies?" Mill asked.

"Hey, Mill!" Bern reprimanded, prompting the boy to hide behind Lili.

"How about these?" Lili asked as she took out some candies.

"Yay! Thank you!" Mill said.

"I'm really sorry about this," Bern said with his head bowed.

Lili waved his apology away as she hid her own embarrassment. "You don't have to apologize. I'm just doing whatever I can while I'm still here."

"Thank you," Bern said. He must have been struggling a lot, as his voice sounded exhausted.

"Lately, I've been looking fondly back at our time in the village," Neumann

said. "There were scary times too, sure, but at least, no one was hungry."

"Now that you mention it," Bern agreed. "Those were fond memories. Even though we didn't spend much time there..."

"The people around here are all weaklings compared to those green bros!" Mill said as he licked his lollipop, prompting Lili, Neumann, and Bern to chuckle.

Three days later, Lili left the north.

The endless winter that imprisoned the mountains of the snow god was still continuing.

The breath that left her mouth was white and cold.

Though she felt like she was being strangled, Lili set out on a trip back to the capital.

Chapter 113: Talpidae Princess

TI Note: Tarpidae to Talpidae.

Status	
Race	Goblin
Level	45
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv30); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

Cynthia bore her fangs into the hard shell of the rock crab, pinning it down under her two front legs as she tore out one of its pincers. Sounds of crunching could be heard from the rock crab, but Cynthia was relentless. The rock crab tried to attack with its remaining pincer, but Cynthia leapt behind it and rammed herself into it, sending it flying into a nearby tree.

The rock crab fainted, Cynthia calmly walked over to finish off her prey. There was an elegance and dignity to the way she walked. That was something she’s always had about her even when she was younger. Cynthia pinned down the unconscious rock crab, when suddenly the rock crab’s remaining pincer snapped at her.

Surprised, Cynthia tried to jump back, but the pincer held firmly to her leg, causing her to lose her balance and fall. As the rock crab stood back up, it lifted Cynthia up in the air, where she hung down helplessly. In a desperate attempt to break free, Cynthia used her free foreleg to scratch at the crab, but unable to

muster any decent power, the most she could accomplish was a shallow wound.

As Cynthia struggled, the rock crab twisted its body and slammed Cynthia into the ground. Grass covered the ground, but that was not enough of a cushion to shield Cynthia from the pain. Ample damage was dealt.

After slamming her into the ground 5 times, the rock crab was about to leave, but...

“GURUuuRUuU,” Cynthia angrily growled.

Cynthia was not done yet, so the rock crab reassumed its fighting stance.

Cynthia might have been taken by surprise a while ago, but though a pup, she was still a gray wolf. The odds of losing in a straight up fight was essentially nil.

The rock crab’s remaining pincer went for Cynthia’s neck, but Cynthia calmly dodged it, and then she tore it off.

With no pincers left to fight with, the rock crab tried to run, but Cynthia’s mouth was already on its head before it could even try.

Cynthia’s powerful jaw forced her fangs deep into the crabs head, causing bodily liquids to burst out of the poor crab’s head.

Lately, we’ve been hunting in an area some distance away from the araneae village. There wasn’t much left to hunt around the village and my talks with Nikea have come to a close, so there wasn’t any reason not to hunt somewhere deeper.

Besides, if we hunted in one place too much, the araneae might be negatively affected. It would be bad if we did anything to sow ill-feelings between us.

Ruknon, the araneae Nikea sent with us, also thought it would be best to hunt elsewhere, so he pointed us to go deeper into the west, where stronger, more vicious beasts lurked. It was there that we met the rock crabs.

Being small, about roughly Cynthia’s size, I thought fighting one would be a good match for her, but the battle proved difficult. It wasn’t because Cynthia was weak, however, but because she was inexperienced. She had the advantage for the majority of the fight until the end, where her carelessness allowed the rock crab to do a number on her.

Though she managed to win in the end, Cynthia walked back with drooped ears. That didn't last for long however, for as soon as I patted her on the head, her ears stood straight back up and her tail happily wagged.

I smiled at that.

"We have defeated the enemy, Your Highness," the ferocious Gi Ba said.

After Cynthia hopped onto my shoulders, I looked up, and I saw the rock crabs being gutted.

"Let's return then," I said.

We went back to the araneae village with all the rock crabs in tow. Rukenon's face seemed to be cramping, but I ignored it. It would only be to my advantage if he reported the things he saw today. If he reported to Nikea how just five goblins seem enough of a threat, perhaps she would stop thinking unnecessary things.

The law of the jungle reigns supreme yet.

I'll just use it to my advantage then.

I'll unite the demihumans under one flag, force the elves under my will, and then encroach into the domain of man.



The Talpidae were closest to the araneae village, hence it took only five days for their chief to arrive.

"A descendant of the dark crystal, the Sharpest Claw, Lord Fanfan," Nikea introduced.

"My name is Fanfan. Greetings, guest," the talpidae slightly nodded.

Brown fur covered the talpidae's small body. Nikea might have been particularly tall, but the fact that the talpidae stood no higher than her hips proved just how small the talpidae was. The talpidae's arms and legs were also overdeveloped with claws sharpened seemingly for war. If one were to describe the talpidae's appearance in a few words, the talpidae could be said to look just like a mole.

The talpidae, Fanfan, looked curiously at me with her – she is a woman, right? I mean her name is Fanfan, so... – two round eyes, scratching her tall nose as she did.

Then she turned to Nikea. “I heard there was someone you wished to introduce... Frankly, I’m a bit surprised...”

Nikea’s brows furrowed, but Fanfan brought her face to hers.

“But, it’s alright... Race... doesn’t matter,” she said.

“Huh?” Nikea asked.

Then Fanfan desperately grabbed at Nikea’s hands, which hovered above her head, and nodded several times.

“Lord Nikea, I’ll support you!”

Nikea tilted her head, puzzled, but Fanfan’s eyes were sparkling.

“I-I see... Thank you.”

“Yes. Well then!”

Fanfan seemed to be quite excited as she left.

Nikea was all smiles as she spoke to me. “How fortunate. It’s a bit troubling that I can’t tell what Lord Fanfan likes about you, but her support will prove to be invaluable.”

‘Her’. So she **was** a female.

“Are all the talpidae like that?”

“Hmm? They are merchants just like the harpies. They are well-informed and are able to swim through soil. They’ve also developed techniques to report—”

“You realize...”

What I was about to say was something really difficult to point out, but it had to be done.

“What’s the matter? It’s rare for you to be so reserved,” Nikea asked, so I went out with it in one breath.

“You realize Lord Fanfan thinks you’re introducing me as your fiancé, right?” I

quickly said.

Immediately, Nikea froze.

You know... if you react that badly, even I won't have any other response but to quietly sigh.

"If you have any intentions of... revising her perception of our relationship, you might want to—"

"Lord Fanfan!!" Nikea yelled as she bolted off like a hare in pursuit of the talpidae princess.

According to Rukenon, that was the first time she's ever been so panicked.



After Nikea cleared up the misunderstanding, we met again.

"Oh, that's too bad," Fanfan said. "But I think there's still a chance."

That was the first time such words have been said to my face. I'm not sure if she's brave or just dumb, but... Hmm... I wonder if there's a reason why she's so friendly to a goblin.

"You sure are friendly," I said.

Fanfan chuckled. "Please don't misunderstand, guest. I'm not that friendly, I just happen to have a set of beliefs I adhere to."

What a friendly tribe. It would be best not to make an enemy out of them. This is the first time a tribe has treated the goblins 'normally', after all.

"It doesn't matter whether it's a goblin or human, as long as there's a male and a female, love can bloom. The bigger the obstacles, the stronger the love! Those are the kinds of people I, Fanfan, support!"

...What am I supposed to say to this? Do I thank her?

I glanced at Nikea, but she had this look on her face that seemed to say, 'Don't even think of pushing her onto me.'

Am I supposed to deal with this by myself?

Somehow it feels like I'm in a predicament worse than when I was fighting

that fiery demihuman.

“Anyway, it’s nice to meet you. Let’s get along.” I said in hopes of building a good relationship with the talpidae.

“But of course! I’m rooting for you, after all!” She said.

I have no idea what she’s talking about anymore.

Isn’t there something I can use to get out of this!?

I looked around me in pursuit of a way out, but aside from Nikea, who was currently polishing up on her acting by acting like she didn’t exist, the only thing left was the tasteless landscape.

—Damn it! There’s nothing! Nothing at all!”

Suddenly, a report came in.

“Chief, Lord Luther of the Papirsag has arrived,” the messenger said.

“Oh, good timing. Let him in,” Nikea said.

Nikea and I sighed in relief.

Fanfan went quiet as reports of various chieftains arriving came.



Cynthia’s level has risen.

30 => 45

Gi Ba’s level has risen.

18 => 24

Gi Do’s level has risen.

67 => 71

Chapter 114: Eight Flags Meeting

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	45
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv45); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

The people gathered in the room were all quite different from humans.

I’ve already been acquainted with Nikea of the araneae, Yushika of the harpies, and Fanfan of the talpidae, but there was more to come, and the names and peculiarities of the people that came after was truly as one would expect from a demihuman.

Mido of the fang tribe, the werewolves, had fangs and his whole body covered in fur. He glared at me when he saw me. It seemed like he was always ready to go to war regardless of the friendly meeting at hand. Just as Nikea had mentioned beforehand, he was not one to hide his dislike for the goblins.

Tanita of the long-tailed tribe, the rizalat, was just like a lizardman with two heads and two tails. He had an exoskeleton over his upper body just like a crustacean, while on his lower body were those things that belonged to amphibians. He didn’t seem to like us much either.

Luther of the shell-tribe, the papirsag, was small and carried a grassy shell on

his back. We met a few days ago, and while he wasn't openly hostile, he had a tendency to avoid us.

Daizos of the man-horse tribe, the centaurs, was from the same tribe as Gurfia, who dreamed of unifying the demihumans; theirs was a tribe of power and wisdom. Like Mido, Daizos seemed to be an adherent of strength. He was not friendly.

The last one to arrive was Kerodotos of the man-bull tribe, the minotaurs. His appearance resembled more a wild buffalo than a farm cow, and he had two giant horns that reached for the skies, both of which were twice as big as mine. His condescending gaze suggested he had much experience as a warrior, though the way he spoke seemed to betray that.

"Hey, hey! Why is there a goblin here?" He said slowly as he began to swing the giant axe on his back at me.

Nikea quickly stepped in to stop him. If not for her, he would have probably actually swung that axe of his. He talks slow, but he seems to actually be short-tempered.

With that, all the members of the eight flag meeting have been gathered.

"I thank everyone for gathering here today," Nikea said. "As the person responsible for calling this meeting, I shall act as its moderator. If there is anyone in—"

Nikea was still in the middle of her speech when the werewolf, Mido, spoke out.

"Why is there a filthy goblin here!?" He said as he glared at me.

"Are you insane? Bringing a filthy goblin to our proud meeting," the centaur, Daizos, said

Luther of the shell tribe didn't say anything out loud, but he was nodding nevertheless, while Tanita of the rizalat seemed to be quietly thinking. Yushika, on the other hand, seemed amused. As for Kerodotos and Fanfan, their thoughts were a mystery.

Everyone seemed to be against Nikea, but it was best to keep quiet for now.

Stepping in now would just make things worse.

“I called this meeting to discuss two main topics. One, the matter regarding our republic, and two, the threat coming from the east. This person here is the king that rules over the goblins of the east. He is our benefactor who has come to inform us of the threat. To treat him poorly would stain our pride,” Nikea said.

Almost everyone looked at me with dubious gazes except for Fanfan, who looked surprised, and Yushika, who seemed amused.

“Threat? What threat? You think these dumb goblins are actually credible?” Mido said.

“I agree with Lord Mido. Why would you trust a goblin!?” Daizos said.

I frowned, but Yushika’s words made everyone quiet.

“Unfortunately, he speaks the truth. Lord Nikea thought you would doubt information from a goblin, so she had me send people to check in advance. I can vouch for the goblin. He speaks the truth; the forest to the east has indeed been invaded,” Yushika said.

“And you are supposed to be... credible?” Tanita’s two heads alternately chuckled.

“But even if he is telling the truth!” Daizos was about to say when the minotaur interjected.

“I don’t like humans!” Kerodotos said.

Everyone except Fanfan furrowed their brows at the minotaurs untimely interjection.

Daizos continued. “Even if what the goblin says is true, that’s no reason to work with them!”

Luther of the papirsag smiled. “That may be so, but... we have already failed to build our country. How much time do we have?”

His eyes seemed sleepy, but from their depths could be seen a sharp gaze.

“I didn’t bother scouting the humans, so I don’t know,” Yushika nonchalantly

said.

“Useless!” Mido of the werewolves spat.

“Oh?” Yushika’s brows raised. “I think I’m much better off than a certain arrogant mutt who’s only good at yelling.”

“Bitch!” Furious, Mido suddenly stood up.

“This is why I hate dogs!” Yushika said as she flew to my side.

Hey, are you seriously planning on dragging me into this mess?

“This goblin king is a lot more reliable,” Yushika said. “Not to mention, profitable. Especially compared to a certain someone who’s all take and no give.”

“Are you insinuating I’m less than a goblin!?” Mido glared at me.

“Stop it!” Nikea yelled. “Have you forgotten you are in the presence of a guest!?”

Yushika shrugged, while Mido clicked his tongue and sat back down.

“In any case, there’s still another issue at hand,” Luther of the papirsag said. “Gurfia’s ghost lurks yet. Unless we deal with that, our republic will remain a but a dream.”

Daizos frowned when he pointed that out.

“Oh, you won’t have to worry about that anymore,” Nikea said.

“What do you mean? That thing is dangerous. You can’t just—” Luther said when Nikea cut him off.

“The goblin king here has already subjugated it,” Nikea curtly said.

“What!?” Suddenly, everyone in the room turned their gazes to me. I stood tall and proud.

“He subjugated it alone. I can vouch for him,” Nikea said.

“It’s the power of love... The power of...” Fanfan said, but her voice was drowned out by everyone else.

“That’s impossible! We couldn’t kill it even with our elites! And yet you’re

saying a single goblin subjugated it!?” Daizos said.

“It’s the truth. Or could it be, Lord Daizos, descendant of the noble crystal, that you doubt my word? That would be an insult to us, descendants of the red crystals,” Nikea glared back.

Daizos bitterly frowned.

“If true, that’s one problem out of the way,” Tanita said, half-believing, as he looked at me with his two heads.

“Along with informing us of the threat, the goblin king has also come to us with a proposal,” Nikea said.

All eyes turned to me. Having a naturally scary face is convenient at times like this.

“A proposal to form an alliance to fight off the humans,” Nikea said.

Suddenly, the chiefs went into an uproar. Though they might have expected it, they probably couldn’t stay put with how proud they are.

“I would like to hear everyone’s opinion,” Nikea said.

The chiefs looked at each other.

“...There are several things I would like to ask first,” Luther of the Papirsag looked at me. “If we reject your proposal, what will happen?”

I answered him. “We will be your enemy. It is better to cut off any possible source of problems sooner than later.”

Everyone glared at me, but it was best to lay things clearly. The demihumans have a right to make a decision, after all. They have the right to decide their path.

Whether they will follow me or go against me.

Whether they will fight with me or not.

Those are the two choices I have presented them. If they make a mistake, they will die. That’s all. It’s not much different than your usual hunt. Of course, being representatives of their various tribes, their decision will affect the rest of their people.

“I would like an answer,” I said.

Everyone turned to me in surprise after hearing my blunt response, even Nikea.

Nikea quickly answered, “We, the descendants of the red crystal, accept that proposal.”

It seems Rukenon has reported to her about our time together. The reason she responded so quickly is surely because she wishes to better her standing.

“Goblin King, must the cooperation in the stand against humans be purely military? Would it be possible to work together in other ways?” Yushika asked.

“Your support doesn’t have to be solely military. If you have other ways to support, I will gladly accept it,” I replied.

“In that case, the harpies shall accept your proposal,” Yushika said.

“Me too,” Fanfan said.

Starting off with a shocking proposal, then following up with some slightly agreeable conditions to make the agreement sound better.

What I presented before the chiefs were two paths, both of which led to war. The only question was which one they would fight, the goblins or the humans? The demihumans might hate the humans, but that alone wasn’t enough to convince them to work alongside the goblins.

Their pride was in the way, so it was necessary to find a way around that.

“I would like some time,” Tanita said with his two heads bowed.

“I would also like to ask for some time,” Luther of the papirsag said.

Seeing them make a difficult face as they went quiet, I laid down another one of my cards.

“How long?” I asked. “The humans won’t wait forever. If you’re going to cooperate, the sooner the better.”

“I need to convince my tribe,” Luther argued. “At least give me 20 days.”

“That won’t do,” I said.

“But!”

I shook my head. “You people are chieftains, leaders of your tribes, their representatives! You carry your tribes on your back! Isn’t it only fitting that you answer with your own minds?”

I continued. “Three days. Give me your answer by then.”

Everyone was quiet.

Suddenly, Kedorotos of the minotoaurs spoke.

“Oh! What a difficult topic! So hard, so hard! If everyone’s ok, why not just agree?” He said as he scratched his head.

“...I thank you for stopping Gurfia,” Daizos of the centaurs said. “But... we cannot possibly ally ourselves with you goblins! Right, Lord Mido?”

“...I have fought with Gurfia once,” Mido said.

Unlike Daizos who was heating up, Mido spoke calmly as he looked at me. The killing intent he had awhile ago was gone.

“Lord Mido?” Daizos said.

“Lord Daizos,” he said. “We werewolves of the fang tribe respect the strong. If this goblin has truly defeated Gurfia... I am thinking of accepting his proposal.”

“Then... The werewolves will accept?” Nikea asked.

“Under one condition.”

“A condition?”

“We of the fang tribe are friends with the wolves. Their eyes are able to discern the truth, and sometimes, they are even able to tell the location of our prey better than us. Goblin... If you truly are the king of the east and someone worthy of forming an alliance with, then they will see you as friends.”

Mido and Daizos stood.

“Three days later, come to the forest to the north, King of Goblins.”

Like that, Mido of the werewolves left with the bitter Daizos.

Intermission: Cynthia’s Adventures I

	Status
Name	Cynthia
Race	Gray Wolf
Level	45
Class	Pup
Possessed Skills	Gale Strike; Charge
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None

Uuu...

Uuu.

“GURUuu...”

I can’t believe I performed so horribly in front of dad...

He patted me on the head as if nothing was wrong, and I ended up wagging my tail as a result, but... I was shocked. Who could’ve thought that crab would pull off such an underhanded trick at the end?

Uuu.

I can’t call Gastra stupid anymore.

Even though I’m supposed to be the older sister who should protect him!

Sigh... What to do? Dad’s not around because of the meeting.

Hmm?

Is that a friend I smell?

Well, dad is busy, so I’m sure it’ll be fine if I go out and play.

Wow, they’re running really fast on two legs.

Oh! They might know of a way to run on two legs!

If I can learn how to run on two legs, I’ll be a lot more like dad!

Kicking off against the branches and passing through the grass, I chased after

the two-legged friends.

Huh? Where did they go?

“...And just when I was wondering who was following us.”

Suddenly, I was taken by the neck.

Hey, stop it!

“GURUuu.”

“Oh, sorry. This isn’t how a lady should be treated.”

L-Lady!?

“Woof!?”

Gently, I was brought back to the ground.

Whew, as I thought, I just can’t be at ease unless my feet are firmly rooted on the ground.

“That’s right. You might be small, but you’re a wonderful lady.”

Oh! So I’m a lady!

“Let me introduce myself, friend. I am Mido. Mido of the werewolves, also known as the tyrant.”

Mido, huh.

He put me back down gently, and he doesn’t seem to be a bad person. I guess I should at least remember his name.

“Woof!”

Cynthia!

“I see, so your name is Cynthia. What an odd name. Was it an elder who named you?”

Hmm? Elder? What’s that? Is he talking about that wrinkled green guy?

“Woof!”

My dad named me! My name means ‘Lady of the Lake Shore’!

“Oh, so you’re dad named you. He seems well-learned. I would like to meet

him, but...”

Hmm? Oh, right!

“Woof!”

Teach me how to run on two legs!

“A way to run on two legs? My, you ask some hard requests, Lady Cynthia. But why ever would you want to run on two legs? Isn’t it faster to run on four?”

Unconsciously, my ears and tail drooped. I wonder if he’ll laugh if I say I want to be more like dad.

“Woof...”

It’s a secret.

“A secret, huh. You know, while I might look like this, I’m a man who keeps his word. Won’t you tell me that secret? If I know the reason, I might be able to teach you better than if I didn’t.”

Oh, so that’s why he wants to know. But what to do...

“Woof?”

Don’t tell anyone, alright? Promise?

“Of course, I swear it on my honor. I would never do something to embarrass a friend.”

Then I guess I can tell him.

“Woof!”

It’s because dad also runs on two legs! I want to become more like dad!

“...”

Huh? Why is he so quiet all of the sudden? And why is he making a difficult face? I know he promised not to tell anyone, but surely that doesn’t mean he won’t talk anymore, right? I mean how is he supposed to teach me if he doesn’t talk?

“Friend... won’t you come with me for a bit?”

I wonder if dad won’t mind me being gone for a while. The sun’s almost set

too.

But I also need to learn how to run on two legs...

“Friend, if my guts are right, this might be your last chance to secure your happiness.”

What!? So this is my last chance?

“Woof!”

Let’s go then!

“Ok then, hop on my shoulder.”

I jumped on Mido’s shoulders just like I did with dad.

“Don’t fall now.”

Of course.

“woof!”



Fast! Mido said running on four legs is faster, but if it’s possible to run this fast on two legs, wouldn’t it be fine?

“We’re almost there, young lady.”

“Woof!”

Right!

The passing wind feels nice. My tail is happily wagging.

We sure came far though. He better send me back home too. I can go home on my own, but it’ll take me a while by myself.

I hope dad doesn’t get mad. If he does, I’ll just have to blame everything on Mido. Right, let’s do that.

“WOooOF!”

Howls suddenly resounded from everywhere.

“We’re here.”

Hmm? We’ve arrived? I don’t think there’s anything here though.

“Mido of the werewolves has come to meet with the friends!”

Mido yelled right by my ears, so my head went dizzy. I almost fell off, but I managed to use my claws to keep myself from falling.

I complained, but Mido kept looking ahead.

Oh? You’re ignoring a lady? That’s pretty gutsy of you! I’ll show you!

I bit him, but then the thickets swayed. When I looked ahead, there were big friends up ahead.

That was my first time seeing them.

“GURUuu.”

I jumped off Mido’s shoulders.

I slowly walked, taking big strides forward while I looked up.

A friend looked down at me.

“Whose daughter are you?”

The words resounded within my head. It seems those words came from this guy in front of me.

Hmm... What do I say to this?

“GURUuu.”

I’m dad’s daughter!

“Fierce fang, do you know of this friend?” Mido asked.

The gray wolf shook his head.

“That would make this one a stray then. I found her in the south, not far from the araneae village.”

What is the name of your father? Your mother? What is your name?”

Arrogant bastard!

“GURUuu.”

Dad is dad! My mom is Reshia! I’m Cynthia!

Tell him! I tried to tell Mido, but when I turned, I saw him crying.

Huh? What's going on? I made Mido cry?

That is not our name.

"So this child really is..."

Someone picked her up and raised her like a pet.

The gray wolf in front of me bared his fangs.

Huh? W-Wait a moment, isn't this a bit scary!?

"There is no one from around here who would dare to do such a thing. Doing so is the same as a declaration of war, after all," Mido said as he wiped his tears.

Huh? Is this wolf mad because Mido is crying?

Is it my fault? Huh?

"But there is someone who came here recently! Those goblins!"

Mido's fangs are getting bigger. Huh? Even his body is getting bigger!? Why!?

Then the answer is clear

"...Unforgivable!! Unforgivable, those beasts!!"

That's a scary pressure, Mido. My ears are ringing, and my tail is shivering.

"I'm gonna kill every single one of those gobs! They will pay for the sin of trampling on our friends!!"

Hmm? Goblin? Is he talking about dad?

"Woof!"

Stop, Mido! I love dad! My dad is strong! So don't do anything!

"Don't worry, little lady. I am also strong... I am the strongest of our tribe. I am the tyrant, Mido! Just wait here, ok?"

Don't turn your back on me! Hey, Mido!

Huh? Where did he go?

Calm down, friend.

The gray wolf spoke again. Yeah, that's right, stop him!

“You think I can calm down!? I’m going to bloody those goblins this instant!”

I’m saying we will also come with you

Mido stopped for a moment, but in the next moment, he burst out.

“Woaaaaaof! I am glan, friend. Right, the enemy of a friend, is the enemy of all. I told him to come here in three days. Let’s kill everyone.”

Huh!?

He’s not an enemy!

“Fierce fang, I know I’m being selfish, but can you take care of this lady here? Can I leave it to you to teach her how to live as she should?”

Rest assured, I shall do as my friend asks

“Thank you, friend! See ya, little lady. I shall wipe away all the shame you’ve gone through!”

Everything happened so fast, by the time I came to, Mido was already gone.

W-Wait Mido!

Shall we go then, little fang? We have to say hello to your elders.

I’m going home!

Trying to resist, eh? What a cheeky brat.

The gray wolf carried me by the neck with his mouth.

Resistance was futile.

Intermission: Cynthia’s Adventures II

Status	
Name	Cynthia
Race	Gray Wolf
Level	45
Class	Pup
Possessed Skills	Gale Strike; Charge
Divine Protection	None

Attributes None

The gray wolf dragged me into the gray wolf den.

It was my first time seeing so many gray wolves in one place, but...

I really have to go home to dad.

Elder, this girl is...

The gray wolf that brought me sounded somber. Just hearing his voice made my tail stand up.

No need, the girl can speak for herself. Young one, where did you come from?

The oldest of the gray wolves spoke.

Ugh... One of his eyes was crushed. Looks painful.

“GURUu.”

From the direction where the sun rises.

What kind of person is your father?

He looked fondly at me as he spoke.

Why isn't he as scary as the others?

Is it because his voice is warm?

My tail was wagging by itself.

“GURURUu.”

He's strong and kind.

He didn't hurt you?

Nope. He's strict, but he always protects me.

Elder!

The gray wolf with a somber voice seemed irritated.

Oho? Ferocious fang, it seems you've gotten less patient over the years.

My apologies.

The gramps they called elder started sniffing me.

It's kinda ticklish.

The tribe of the wise ones shall take care of this child. Tell that to the fang tribe.

The surrounding gray wolves all bowed their head.

Gramps is pretty awesome, huh.

Young fang, sleep here tonight. On my name, ancient fang, I swear no harm will come upon you.

"GURUuuu."

Thanks but I really have to go back to dad.

The surrounding gray wolves seemed irritated when I said that.

Hmm... That's a bit troubling. Unfortunately, there is too much danger lurking in the forest. If something were to happen to you, wouldn't your father be sad?

"GURUu..."

I suppose... I mean he was really sad when Mommy Reshia left. Even until now he would sometimes look out into the distance. Gastra was taken too...

In that case, be a good girl and rest here tonight. I'll be sure to contact your dad.

"GURU?"

Really?

This gramps wouldn't lie to you

Alright, then I guess I'll spend the night here.

Hear me, my people! Tonight! We shall celebrate the arrival of a new blood from the east! We shall feast!

Gramps howled as he said those words.

My tail wagged as his loud voiced resounded.



Gramps said he wanted to hear my story, so we sprawled ourselves over the

grass in a sunny place.

The soft grass sure feels nice.

Your dad seems strong.

That's right. Be it deer or giant spiders, dad can take on anything!

I ended up telling him about my wish to run on two legs. Even though it was supposed to be a secret with Mido... But then again, gramps might know something, so...

Say, Cynthia...

Gramps' lone eye looked both gentle and sad.

"GURUu?"

What?

You're a smart kid, so I'm sure you've noticed it already. You and your dad are different, so running on two legs is—

"GURUuuu!!"

—No! I am my dad's daughter!

I won't listen. I won't hear it.

I might be four-legged now, but one day, I'll definitely stand on two legs!

I am dad's daughter! I am my mom's daughter!

Cynthia

"GURUuGAUuuu."

Why would you say something like that, gramps!?

The other wolves including Mido might all make puzzled faces whenever I talk about dad, but you're wrong, gramps! Or is that what you really think!?

Cynthia that's not what I mean

"GURUuuU."

Stop it!

My dad is my dad! Stop trying to take him away! If you think he's not my dad

just because I walk on four legs, then I'll walk on two legs! I don't need anyone to teach me how!

I love my dad!

I don't want to be anyone else's daughter!

So stop it!

My emotions were a mess as I mouthed off like that. Even my tail was shaking.

Cynthia!

Gramps called out, but I ran away.

I didn't want to hear his excuses.



I ran and ran until I couldn't anymore and stopped under a giant tree.

"GURUu—"

They're wrong. All of them. One day, I'll be able to stand on two legs just like mom and dad.

I'm just a bit slow, that's all.

Leaning onto the tree with my front legs, I helped myself up.

See? even I can do it.

If I just keep training like this, I'm sure I'll be able to walk on two legs eventually.

One, two... When I got to the third step, my front legs fell back to the ground.

Again.

One, two... And then my front legs fell.

Again.

One, two... And then my front legs fell.

Again.

...

After countless failures, I fell to my back, my back legs completely exhausted.

—The truth is...

I know.

I don't look like mom or dad. Gastra and I were clearly different than the others.

And the reason behind that is probably...

My chest began to hurt as I thought to myself, tears welling up from my eyes.

Weird... So, weird...

Sniff...

What are you doing, young fang?

It's that somber sounding wolf. Since when was he standing there?

"GURUu."

I'm practicing to walk on two legs.

The gray wolf sighed before taking a seat beside me.

Let me tell you a story... A story about our chief.

I don't want to hear it.

No, you have a duty to hear it.

The pressure emanating from the wolf's gaze bore down on me.

Our chief was named wise and big fang. He was young, strong, and wise. He was the son of the elder and my cousin, a wolf who carried the hope of a tribe on his shoulders.

The gray wolf's voice was gentle as he seemed to look somewhere distant.

At the time, we were starving. We have food problems even now, but it was different then. Back then, the hunger was so great we had to eat each other just to survive. I don't know what caused the famine, but regardless, because of that someone had to find a new home for the tribe.

Gradually, a hint of sadness filled his voice.

He seems sad.

There was a legend passed down from our ancestors. According to it, there's a paradise to the east. A bountiful land where the wolves had no enemies. Those living on that land all had no fangs, and even if they did, they would only be harmless critters.

The gray wolf smiled.

Someone needed to go scout the land, the one who volunteered was none other than our young chief. Our young, strong, and wise chief. He stood up in our time of trouble and headed to the unknown land with his wife.

The gray wolf turned to me.

But he never came back. Fortunately, the famine ended and we survived. Still, he did not return. Many moons passed, and then... you appeared.

Various emotions filled his eyes. There was hope, and then there was love.

Do you know? Where our chief, the wise and big fang went?

“...GURUu.”

I don't. Sorry.

Naturally. After all, if he were alive, do you think he would allow his own child to fall into his enemy's hands!?

The gray wolf growled as he bared his fangs.

I won't forgive your father's killer. He dared kill my cousin, my brother. Even his wife. And then he even went so far as to raise their children as his pets!

“GURUuu!”

You're wrong! My dad wouldn't do such a thing! Dad is kind!

Wrong! The only reason your dad seems kind is because he's raising you to be a pet! Young fang, remember your pride.

One moment stern, the next moment kind.

When I heard your howl, I knew then that you carried his blood. Our hearts stirred at the sound of your voice. One day you will be able to lead our tribe.

Young fang, come with us. With you at the lead, one day, perhaps we will restore our former glory, where we knew no hunger.

“Woof...”

I don't know. I don't know...

Think about it. If you come with us, everyone will welcome you.

What's his problem? Saying whatever he wants... I want to be with dad.

What's with that wise and big fang?

...

But...

“Woof.”

...It sounds nostalgic... and reassuring.

What should I do?

Chapter 115: Parent and Child

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	45
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv45); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

“Are you really going, Your Highness?” Gi Za Zakuend asked.

I nodded.

“Not to speak ill of a fellow descendant of the crystal, but Lord Mido is also infamously known as the Tyrant. He is an agile warrior and is by no means weak. At the very least, you should take some of your subordinates with you,” Nikea said.

Apparently, even she thought I was being reckless.

“My subordinates need to welcome the goblins headed here. Gi Za also has his duties here as the leader of those goblins. Because of that I have to go alone,” I said.

Everyone looked troubled.

If they make that sort of face, I’ll be troubled too.

“The king has spoken, I will obey,” Gi Za said, at which, everyone else

conceded.

I prepared for the trip to the north, but... even if I say 'prepare' there's not really much to prepare.

"I'll be going then," I said.

Like that I left for the place Mido chose. It was a day's distance from here and probably their home.



"Did you wait long?" I asked.

"Not at all," Mido said as he glared at me.

The people behind him seemed to be the bigwigs of their village. Their fangs were bare, and they looked about ready to attack at any time. They were all men, every one of them strong. Their muscles bulged and their eyes shot sharply. They stood just far enough from each other so as to not hinder their movements. Not a single one of them appeared weak.

"Come," Mido said.

I could feel hate and anger from his glare. Did something happen? Or was this his aim from the start?

But it's strange. If he intends to kill me, why would he show his hate so openly? If anything he should be hiding his intentions.

When we first met during the meeting, he seemed hostile, but he wasn't angry or hateful by any means. So why? Why is he so angry now?

Whatever the reason it seems the sword by my waist has become necessary.

How unfortunate. It would have been great if we could take them in as allies.

Gripping my sword once to ascertain it was there by my waist, I followed Mido.

"What a spectacular welcome you've prepared," I said.

If he does intend to fight, then I might as well rile him up as much as I can to get the upper hand.

“Hmph,” Mido said.

“Who would’ve thought the proud werewolves would pick on one goblin. How ridiculous.”

Mido grit his teeth.

Ever since we first met during the meeting, I could tell he’s the impulsive type. Since we’re going to fight anyway, I might as well get as much advantage I can.

I am the king. Defeat is unacceptable.

My defeat would mean the defeat of the entire goblin race.

My lips curved as I thought that.

I guess I was being too naive. I should have asked for an escort after all.

Inwardly, I sneered at having refused Gi Za’s and Nikea’s advice.

I continued following Mido and egging him on, but he was a lot more patient than expected.

No matter how many times I taunted him, he never attacked.

Was his hate so great that he could keep his emotions in check? But I didn’t do anything, did I?

Being attacked without knowing why is really unpleasant.

“We’re here, Monster,” Mido said.

Before us were flat plains with no trees in sight, an oddity considering we passed by so many trees. I looked around to the thickets in the area, which promptly shook. In the next moment, something came out of the thickets.

—Gray wolf!?

“From your reaction, it seems you have met them,” Mido said.

The image of two gray wolves and a death match flashed through my mind. It was a battle that occurred when I was still just a duke.

This are not the same wolves back then.

I shook off the image of those gray wolves in my mind.

—It can't be them!

The thickets shook again, and gray wolf after gray wolf of various sizes came out.

"They are our friends. This'll be nothing more than an execution, I believe, but I'll watch over as referee anyway," Mido said before laughing loudly.

Naive, too naive.

I didn't even think of the possibility of being betrayed. My trust in the demihumans grew greatly after meeting Nikea, but it seems I was too soft. Different races act differently. These werewolves apparently hate me so much that they are willing to lure me into a trap to kill me. And the reason behind their hate is none other than the gray wolves.

—In that case...

I will accept their challenge.

I swore the day I defeated that gray wolf. If any wishes to challenge me, I shall gladly accept as king.

"GURURUuuuu," a one-eyed gray wolf left the pack and charged toward me. Two others followed after it. They were all bigger than the rest of the pack. These must be the chiefs of their pack. In that case, I will cut them down and open a path to survival.

The pressure bearing down grew stronger as the gray wolves' encirclement tightened.

But then...

"WooOOOof!"

A small shadow came out of the encirclement.

It stood between me and the chiefs.

"Cynthia," I muttered.

I've been worrying these past few days since I haven't seen her in a while, but it seems she's safe.

But seeing her here isn't all good.

Can I break through this encirclement with her?

But just as I was thinking of a plan, I noticed the pressure bearing down from the encirclement grow weaker.

“Young master!?” Mido cried.

Young master? Who’s he talking about? Cynthia? What’s going on?

But while I had no idea what was going on, Cynthia stepped forward and growled.

Should I stop her?



What are you doing, young fang?

I thought it through during the night. I thought really, really hard, and... As I thought, I still want to be dad’s daughter!

You spent the night thinking, did you? But regardless, if we don’t avenge our fallen chief now, when will we ever have our vengeance?

The onlookers watched Cynthia and the ferocious fang’s exchange carefully. Cynthia’s voice was so small, but for some reason, it resounded so clearly.

The sound of her voice urged me to bow my head.

I never met the wise and big fang personally, but I’m sure... this must be the power of his blood, the blood of the strongest gray wolf.

What a powerful and yet wise voice.

Then stop us if you can. I can no longer stop myself from avenging our fallen chief!

The ferocious fang stepped onward.

If you touch even a single finger of father’s, I won’t forgive you! I absolutely won’t forgive you! I am the daughter of the goblin king and Mommy Reshia, I won’t lose!

Pathetic! Even though you know full well a goblin can’t be your father!

The ferocious fang and Cynthia both used Gale Strike, an attack that turned

one's own body into the wind and rammed it into one's foe. The two gray wolves slammed into each other, causing the lighter of the two to fly.

Cynthia was sent high up into the air, but she skillfully manipulated her body, allowing her to land on the ground, then she use Gale Strike again.

It's useless!

Fang took Cynthia's charge head on, and when Cynthia fell back down, he raised up his front legs and swung them down. Being one of the bigger gray wolves of the pack, his attack caused the land to shake. That attack landed beside Cynthia's face.

The difference in strength is clear. Give up. I don't want to hurt you

The ferocious fang's words were filled with parental love, but Cynthia snarled back at him.

No! I'm going to protect Dad!

Cynthia bit at ferocious fang's legs, but he lifted them up and slammed her into the ground.

Cynthia cried each time she was slammed into the ground, but she held on. Gradually, however, the hold of her fangs loosened, and in the end, she let go. Holding on was the most her young body could do. Cynthia no longer showed any signs of moving.

Goblin, because of you I had to stain my paws with the blood of a relative.

Filled with rage, ferocious fang turned his back on Cynthia, but the moment he turned to the goblin king, he felt something on his tail.

Stay away from Dad!

Cynthia should have long realized the gap in their strength, but the moment ferocious fang let his guard down, Cynthia took him by the tail, lifted him up, and threw him.

Rage filled the ferocious fang.

It seems kindness will do nothing more than spoil you!!

Swift as the wind, the ferocious fang slammed into Cynthia and sunk his

strong fangs into her body. Cynthia faltered, but the ferocious fang pursued.

Gradually, wounds started to cover Cynthia's body. The bleeding sapped her of her strength, and being young as she was, she would soon reach her limits.

She tried to run away from the ferocious fangs' bite, but she couldn't dodge everything, and in the end, her front legs were wounded. But still, she jumped back, and with her front legs she suppressed the ferocious fang's fangs.

"Cynthia!" The goblin king cried.

It seems the goblin king has finally reached his limits. He unsheathed the sword by his waist as his eyes kept watch on the two gray wolves fighting.

Don't come! I'm fine!

There's no way the goblin king understood her words, but somehow, he understood what she wanted to say.

The goblin king buried his sword into the ground.

"Mark my words, if something bad happens to Cynthia, I will hunt every single one of you mutts down!!" The goblin king's words resounded so loudly it seemed the heavens and the earth would be devoured.

Mido and the surrounding wolves couldn't help but falter at his words, but the two gray wolves fighting did not even notice him. They were that focused on their battle.

It no longer mattered that his opponent was a pup. The ferocious fang could no longer afford to go easy on her. As they bit each other, Cynthia's attacks gradually became sharper. The great blood of the wise and big fang was surely flowing in her veins. The sight unfolding before our eyes now is the very proof of that.

Suddenly, the figure of my cousin, whose back I once followed, appeared!

I felt heat pass by my cheeks. Cynthia's fangs just passed by me, but they seemed to have grazed me.

To think her fangs were so sharp they could actually tear off the fur of a gray wolf. She's so young and full of wounds, and yet... It feels like if I let my guard down, I could actually lose to her.

It's almost as if the gray wolf fighting in front of me wasn't her but my cousin.

Impossible, impossible!

The ferocious fang used all of his strength and bit at the neck of the illusion.

In the next instant, something hit him at the bottom of his chin, causing him to stagger.

When he turned around, the gallant figure of that great fang overlapped with the small gray wolf.

At that, the ferocious fang put down his fang, and Cynthia walked over to the goblin king, who welcomed her kneeling on one leg.

Just before she reached the king, Cynthia stood up on two legs and walked tottering toward the king.

Dad, you know, I!

When she was about to fall, the king held her up with his hands.

"You don't have to do that, silly. Did you think I would abandon you if you weren't like me?"

The goblin king took her into arms and lovingly caressed her wounds.

The gentle look on his face looked nothing like that of a goblin's but more that of a loving father.

Finally at ease, Cynthia lost the last of her strength and fell asleep. She probably didn't get a wink of sleep last night.

As Cynthia peacefully slept in the arms of the goblin king, a lone gray wolf stepped out from the pack.



A one-eyed wolf stepped out from the pack and growled.

Is this one next? They sure did Cynthia in. I'll have to pay them back for that.

But just as I was about to take out my sword, I heard Mido speak.

"Hey, goblin. The elder wants to talk with you. I'm going to interpret for him, so listen well."

There was no longer any lust in Mido's words. It seems the fang tribe has come to a conclusion with the gray wolves.

"Goblin King, I hear you came from the east. Could you have happened across one of ours?" Mido said, interpreting the gray wolf's growls.

"This happened a long time ago, but I once came across a pair of gray wolves." I said.

"May I know what happened to them?" The gray wolf said through Mido.

"One of them died under my hands, while the other one died after giving birth."

Mido's voice began to shake. Is that because of the gray wolf? Or is that because of his own emotions?

"I see," the gray wolf said through Mido. "I suppose that makes you my son's murderer and my grandchild's benefactor."

Vengeance, huh. Never did I think the gray wolves were capable of such emotions. Here I thought they were just beasts, but it seems they value their comrades a lot.

"...Do you have something, a memento of some sort, that belongs to my son?"

Quietly, I took out the pelt of the gray wolf stuffed into the openings of my armor. It's all torn up because I've been fighting with it for so long, but if there's any proof worth showing, it's this.

The gray wolf sniffed the pelt.

"...Thank you. My son fought well, it seems."

"AwoooooOOOooo!"

The gray wolf howled sorrowfully, almost as if it was crying its heart out.

The surrounding gray wolves followed suit, and they all howled.

It almost seemed as if they were trying to reach some place up above in the heavens where their brethren lived on.



Cynthia’s level has risen.

45 => 1

Status

Name	Cynthia
Race	Gray Wolf
Level	1
Class	Adult; Successor of the Pack
Possessed Skills	Raging Gale Strike; Charge; Great Blood; Howl of the Beast King; King of the Plains; Ferocious Fangs; Wise Girl
Divine Protection	Goddess of Wisdom
Attributes	None
Abnormal Status	Subservient to the Goblin King

Raging Gale Strike

—You can greatly accelerate if you howl at the same time.

Charge

—Ram your body into the foe and send it flying.

Great Blood

- Growth rate increased.
- Charm effect toward those of the same race.

Howl of the Beast King

- Enemies weaker than you will be suppressed.
- Your strength will be temporarily raised.

King of the Plains

- HP Regen increased while fighting on the plains. (LOW)
- It is possible to lead lower class wolves or other dog-type races.

Wise Girl

- Can be understood better by those of the same race.
- Can be understood slightly better by those of other races.

Intermission: Positioning

TI Note: Gi Ji Arsil is different from Gi Jii. Also, Decapitation Knight to Ripper Knight

Status	
Race	Gi Jii
Level	86
Class	Rare
Possessed Skills	Overpowering Howl; Sword Mastery C-; Wide-Open Eyes; Omnivorous; Appeal
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None

The assassin, Gi Ji Arsil, left the demihuman village as the king’s messenger. As this was the second time he left for the Fortress of the Abyss, it took him only three days to reach it. He had already gotten used to the route. Moreover, there were trails left behind, which he could follow.

Gi Ji Arsil arrived at the fortress safely and asked for an audience with the knight class, Gi Ga Rax, who was responsible for the fortress in the king’s absence.

“The king wants more soldiers to be sent to the demihuman village,” Gi Ji Arsil said.

Gi Ga was as focused on training the goblins as ever. From time to time, he would glance sharply at the goblins swinging their spears.

“How many does the king need?” Gi Ga Rax asked.

“The king didn’t say, though I suppose as much goblins as it would take to secure a foothold,” Gi Ji Arsil replied.

“In that case, the king will probably need enough goblins to work his way from the village into the west. There should still be some time until the battle with the humans, but...”

Gi Ga worried that the king might have forgotten about the threat to the east.

The words of the humans – not to mention, the words of the enemy – could not be trusted. The king must surely have his considerations, however.

If only they disciplined the kobolds better, they could put them to better use, but unfortunately, the king did not wish to. To go against the king's word was to err as his retainer, therefore, Gi Ga could only count the soldiers he would need to send.

"80 goblins," Gi Ga Rax said. "To respond to the king's command with our utmost effort is our duty."

"That many?" Gi Ji Arsil was shocked.

"Lord Rashka of the Gaidga should be able to send another 40. Lord Aluhaliha of Paradua and Princess Narsa of the Ganra should both be able to send another 10 each. We'll need a day's time to prepare everyone," Gi Ga Rax added.

"The king will be glad," Gi Ji Arsil said.

"Gi Ji Arsil, there is something I wish to ask of you," Gi Ga Rax said.

"What is it?"

"Would you scout the east?"

"The east... You mean the orcs?"

"There are orcs too, yes, but I'm more interested in the humans. I find it hard to believe that they would be willing to withdraw just like that. The king seems to trust the humans' words, but..."

"Are you sure you're not just thinking too much?"

Ga Rax shook his head. "I don't mean to doubt the words of the king, but... our enemy is human. Against them, there is no such thing as too much preparation. A defeat like before won't be forgiven again. This is our home. If we lose it, we will have no home left to return to."

Gi Jii Arsil nodded. "I understand. Fortunately, the king has asked me to stay here for a while."

"Thank you. I'll leave it in your hands."

After asking Gi Ji Arsil to scout, Gi Ga Rax left to pick out the goblins. 140 goblins all-in-all would be sent. Such a large horde would require a proportionate amount of food to sustain it. Gi Ga Rax asked the Gordob goblin in charge of the food to calculate how much would be needed, while he sent the Paradua messengers to send word to the tribes.

Like this Gi Ga Rax quickly gathered the goblins. All that was left was to appoint a leader over the horde.

“Did the king mention who would be leading?” Gi Ga Rax asked.

“No, he didn’t mention anyone in particular,” Gi Ji Arsil said.

Gi Ga groaned as he became thoughtful. The fact that the king didn’t name anyone was proof that he trusted him. He had to answer to that trust.

The noble classes Gi Gu Verbena, Gi Go Amatsuki (Sword God), Gi Gi Orudo (Ancient Beast Tamer), Gi Zu Ruo (Shishi) have all been sent out to expand the horde, and Gi Ga Rax himself was responsible for the fortress. If a leader over this horde were to be appointed, it would have to be a rare class.

—When you think about class, Lord Rashka of the Gaidga seems most appropriate, but with such a large horde, perhaps the First Archer of the Gadieta, Lord Gilmi Fishiga, would be a better pick. Lord Aluhaliha of the Paradua wouldn’t be bad either.

But every one of them is a chieftain of their tribe.

—Would it really be alright to send them?

Gi Ga could not come to a conclusion. He wished Gi Zo was around. That goblin was particularly knowledgeable in all fields even among the druids.

Gi Da wouldn’t be bad either. He was plenty strong and was even skilled at the spear. It was truly regrettable that they passed so young.

“What am I doing?” Gi Ga grimaced.

Wait, wasn’t there someone? Someone particularly skilled at leading?

“Is Gi Jii around?” Gi Ga muttered.

It was convenient having Gi Jii around, who was trained by Gi Gu himself, but

if Gi Ga was to send someone to safely lead a horde of over a hundred goblins, there was no goblin more fit for the job.

“You needed something?” Gi Jii asked after being called.

The way the goblin stood as he wore his sword by his waist and his armor over his body spoke of his experience as a warrior. Gi Ga felt at ease as soon as he saw him.

“If you have an order for me, I will fulfill it,” Gi Jii said.

After appointing Gi Jii as the leader of the horde, Gi Ga decided to run him through a quick training course.

To cover Gi Jii’s weaknesses, he asked the newly evolved rare goblins Gi Bi (Water Mage), Gi Bu (Beast Tamer), and the one-armed Gi Be to go with him.

He called all of them out and ran them through a quick course.



While the goblin king went out to meet with the chief of the werewolves, the chief of the centaurs, Daizos, went back to his tribe.

Daizos felt guilty using Mido to delay the goblin king, but he needed to inform the people staying in his village of the threat looming over his tribe.

“Is Lord Cecil and Lord Shunan in?” Daizos asked.

The centaur did not even have the time to clean himself before urgently requesting an audience with the people staying in the centaur village.

The centaurs were prominent even among the demihumans. One reason behind that was because of their race’s natural gift in fighting. Their male and their females could all fight in battle without discrimination. Moreover, much of their knowledge had been successfully passed down throughout the generations. They also lived the closest to the elves. That in and of itself was proof of their strength.

With such a proud history behind their race, Daizos would naturally not be the kind of man who would easily bow his head to someone.

“Let him in,” a voice said from inside the biggest building in the village.

It was usually meant for the chief to live in, but right now, it was being used as a guest house.

As Daizos timidly entered, two people came to view.

Either one of them was beautiful. One was in the prime of his life, while the other was relatively young. These were people sent by the elves.

The older of the two elves frowned when he saw Daizos' unkempt appearance. Sensing his displeasure, the younger one spoke before he could.

"What's the matter? Why are you in such a hurry?" The younger one asked.

"Lord Shunan, actually..." Daizos, on his knees, began to say, but the older of the two elves interjected.

"What's the matter, Daizos? Is that how you choose to present yourself before the proud elves?" The older elf said as he glared at the younger elf, Shunan, reminding him which of them had the right to speak.

"Please excuse me for my unsightly appearance, Lord Cecil, but the situation requires that I inform you posthaste."

Hmph, Cecil sneered as he looked condescendingly at the kneeling Daizos.

"What is the matter?" Cecil asked.

"Please escape the village as soon as you can," Daizos said.

"What? What's going on?" Cecil's beautiful brows rose.

"All the other tribes except for the centaurs and the fangs have been tricked by the goblins. They will be attacking soon."

Silence filled the room. The elves could not comprehend.

"...Goblins?" Cecil asked.

"Yes, the goblin king from the east—" Daizos tried to explain, but...

"Fool! Are you thinking straight!?" Cecil exploded.

Unfortunately, Daizos well-intentioned advice was met with disdain.

"But," the younger of the two, Shunan, tried to reason, but unfortunately, Cecil would have none of it. In fact, he even turned his anger to the younger elf.

“Lord Shunan, surely you couldn’t possibly be saying that you believe this nonsense?” Cecil said as he glared hatefully and refused to listen to anyone. “A goblin, Lord Shunan? A goblin. What are goblins? They are vulgar, coarse, and dirty! Do you honestly believe such—things could actually trick the demihumans and stage an attack on us?”

Unable to release his anger with his words alone, Cecil stood up from his chair and walked over to the kneeling Daizos.

“Do you take me for a fool? Hmm?” Cecil spat. “If you intended to weasel your way out of paying your due taxes, it would have been better if you said the humans attacked instead!”

“I have no such—” Daizos tried to reason.

“I will hear no excuses!” Cecil spat before taking his seat again. “Because I will not be leaving until you pay your dues.”

Shunan frowned at Cecil’s outburst.

“...I understand. Please excuse me,” Daizos said.

Cecil sneered as he watched Daizos left depressed.

“Wasn’t that too much? Even they are struggling. Moreover, it isn’t as if the taxes they pay are compulsory. They only pay out of gratitude,” Shunan said.

Cecil sneered. “If I may remind you, Lord Shunan, I, Lord Cecil, am chief envoy, whereas you are merely vice-envoy.”

“I am aware, however—”

“If you know, then please keep your opinions to yourself. Just because your older brother is now a member of the council doesn’t mean you have the right to interfere in my duties.”

“My apologies. I did not intend to poke my nose where it does not belong, but at this rate—”

“The demihumans are no more than tenants. It is only right that they pay their rent.”

“Lord Cecil, that is going too far.”

Hmph, Cecil sneered.

Sighing quietly to himself, Shunan stood up and left the house.

“Where are you going, Lord Shunan?” Cecil asked.

“I’m going to take a walk outside,” Shunan replied.

“Hmph, nothing will change even if you flatter those demihumans.”

Shunan pretended he didn’t hear Cecil’s last comment as he went out to follow Daizos.



“Lord Daizos,” Shunan called out.

Daizos was hurriedly ordering his men when Shunan called out.

“Lord Shunan,” Daizos said as he quickly knelt. Please excuse my earlier behavior.”

“Please don’t apologize, Lord Daizos,” Shunan said. “If anything, it should be me apologizing. I hope you can forgive Lord Cecil’s outburst.”

“It’s alright, Lord Shunan. I understand full well how ridiculous my story was. It’s just that...”

“It’s true, isn’t it?”

“Yes. That goblin was cunning. He used the threat of the humans to rouse our sense of crisis, and then he tricked us with his words and his strength.”

“You mentioned he came from the east... Weren’t the orcs living in the east?”

Daizos was in awe of the young man’s knowledge. Truly, the elves were worthy of their respect. They were not aware only of matters concerning them, but even of matters far away. Moreover, the fact that the elves knew meant that they cared. To Daizos nothing could be more reassuring.

“They did live in the east, but... Lately, the orcs haven’t been appearing. It’s possible the goblins might have annihilated them,” Daizos said.

“They’re that formidable?” Shunan said in surprise. Though calm, there was a hint of fear mixed in his words.

“Please rest assured, we will surely protect you and Lord Cecil.”

“Don’t push yourselves too much though. After all, you could always hand us over to the other descendants of the crystals.”

“Absolutely not, Lord Shunan. How could we possibly let the goblins have you? If such a thing were to happen, we would no longer be able to face our ancestors.”

“Anyway, I’m sorry for bothering you while you’re busy. If there’s anything I can do to help, please just say it.”

“It’s alright. Please rest well.”

At Daizos’ urging, Shunan went back to his lodging.

“If worse comes to worse, I shall use my life to protect you,” Daizos muttered to himself.

Like this the centaurs readied themselves for battle.



King Ashtal sat in his office, where all the unnecessary things often used for formalities’ sake have been cleared out.

He spoke alone with another man.

“The scarlet maiden... She’s gotten quite popular, hasn’t she?”

Ashtal Do Germion, the man who stood at the apex of Kingdom Germion’s army. He happily nodded as he read the reports.

“Yes, the adventurers did a good job spreading her name,” the iron-armed knight, Gowen Ranid, said.

Ever since the defeat in the forest, these two men have been getting closer. They both knew the gravity of that defeat. Hence, they also understood that they needed to work together if they were to overcome this new threat.

Gowen rarely went to the capital in the past, but ever since his defeat in the forest, he has been proactively approaching the king. The situation at hand had forced him to.

Once a war with the monsters broke out, he would immediately have to

borrow soldiers from the capital. He could fight solely with the soldiers he has at hand, but such a stand would surely not last.

The goblins are infamous for their high birth rate. They are known to kidnap the females of other races, impregnating them to increase their numbers. Because of that Gowen had sent out a proclamation restricting women from frolicking outside. Patrols were also increased. It took a lot of effort just to spot the beasts that would come out the forest from time to time.

“When will she be ready?” The king asked.

He was referring to the scarlet maiden.

“She has earned much fame in the north already, so the next would either be the west or the south,” Gowen said.

Ashtal played with the feather pen on his hands as he became thoughtful.

“Have her go the south then. Send her to the Ripper Knight. Put a leash on her while you’re at it, a sweet-tasting leash.

It was necessary to have a failsafe on the knights of the country.

“We can start with her family. Start gathering info on them,” Ashtal said.

“Alright,” Gowen said.

Ashtal’s gaze grew sharper as he tried to measure Gowen’s depths.

“Just that won’t be enough, however.”

“Yes, it would be a great help if you would allow the construction of a colonial city.”

“Colonia, huh.”

The colonial cities are focal points of conquest. In times of war, they could be used as fortresses. In times of peace, they could be used for political maneuvering. They are essentially tools of conquest, but the cost behind them was proportional to their power.

It was those colonial cities that Gowen had requested of the king. King Ashtal closed his eyes once again. The threat from the west, Gowen’s strength and his loyalty... There were many things that needed to be weighed.

The existence of a wise monster as well. If Gowen's words were to be believed, this was past the point of a mere subjugation request.

A war between man and monster.

"...Very well. Fortunately, the Storm Knight, Gulland, has returned, so we have the advantage. For a brief time, we can restrain our offensive maneuverings. The Ripper Knight has done a good job filling in for Gene's absence in the south too."

Everything was under the assumption that the Holy Shushunu Kingdom to the east remained friendly.

Time was needed before they would be able to suppress the bandits to the north. The hole left by the death of the Lightning-Fast Knight was somehow filled in by the Ripper Knight's fervorous activities. If there was ever a time to take a breather, it was now.

"Start preparing for a war to the west. We'll take down those monsters," King Ashtal said.

When workers are needed, the economy will kick in. As a result, people will gather and taxes will rise. If you use war as a pretense, even soldiers can be used.

Ashtal decided to accept Gowen's multifaceted plan. The soldiers would have no rest in the coming construction, but that was fine. There was little point in repeating the same training over and over anyway.

Once more, the humans stretched out their hands in pursuit of the forests' wealth.

Chapter 116: Duty

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	45
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

The fang tribe had successfully been annexed.

As soon as the elder agreed, Mido agreed as well. I commented on his lack of individuality and he replied, “I know I’m inexperienced, so it is best to let the elder decide everything. Now that he has reconciled with you, I have too.”

It was my first time seeing a chief utilize his subordinates in this way. Apparently, different tribes have different preferences for leaders. Interesting.

Speaking of interesting, Cynthia accomplished a lot today. It was thanks to her that the fang tribe could reconcile with me. If she wants Mido as an ally, then I’ll have to acquiesce.

I’ll just have them pay me back by working them to the bones.

Gi Ji Arsil managed to accomplish his mission without fail.

140 goblins stood before me. Most of them were from the Gi Village, but there were also some from the tribes.

Leading them was Gi Jii. Impressive how he was able to control this large of a horde.

“Well done, Gi Jii,” I said.

“I am happy to serve the king,” he replied. “It wasn’t just me, however, the others helped too.”

It seems the goblins from the tribes helped out. Dashka of Gaidga gathered the goblins with strength, Ru Rou of Ganra scouted, and Hal of Paradua protected the goblins falling by the wayside and acted as messengers.

Aside from having a leader to bring various hordes together, it seems it’s also necessary to have people to help that leader.

Dashka, Ru Rou, Hal, every single one of these goblins were elite. What an unexpected blessing. I expected a lot to come, but I didn’t think there would be so many young elites.

I called out to the three goblins kneeling behind Gi Jii.

“Dashka of Gaidga, I look forward to fighting with you,” I said.

“Ha!” He replied.

“Ru Rou, work well so as to not let your village down. You did well today,” I said.

“Thank you, Your Highness,” Ru Rou replied.

“Hal, you have brought much glory to your name. The day when your name can stand alongside Aluahliha’s doesn’t seem far off,” I said.

“Just matching my predecessor won’t be enough. I intend to keep going,” Hal replied.

After speaking to the three goblins, I turned back to Gi Jii.

“You did well today. Keep it up,” I said.

“Yes, my king,” Gi Jii replied calmly.

I smiled at that.

“...This many can’t fit in the village,” Nikea said behind me.

She seemed shocked at the number of goblins.

“It’s fine. We can stay outside,” I said.

I ordered Gi Jii to make camp.

Camping wasn’t an issue, though of course, we still needed to pick a place that could shelter us from the wind and the rain, otherwise, we wouldn’t be able to rest much.

“I will be staying with my subordinates. Just let me know when there’s a meeting,” I said.

“What!? But...” Nikea was flabbergasted.

“If my subordinates act poorly in any way, inform me. We will respect your laws, though with this many, I’ll have to trouble you about the food,” I added.

“Very well. I will open our reserves a little. If we go individually, it should take 5 days for us to reach the centaur village.”

There are plenty of goblins, so my horde will probably arrive a little later.

“We’ll probably take six days on our side. We’ll leave first thing in the morning tomorrow. What of the other descendants?”

“Lord Luther of the Shell Tribe, the Papirsag, has agreed. It seems your goblin horde was a bit too much of a threat. Lord Tanita of the Long-Tailed Tribe has yet to arrive at a decision, but I’m sure he will be joining as soon as he gets word of Lord Luther’s decision.”

The demihumans would definitely want to avoid getting the short end of the stick.

The issue right now is the army we will be rallying against the centaurs.

“Do you really plan on waging a war on the centaurs?” Nikea asked.

“But of course. If they surrender...”

If they surrender I won’t make them sign any conditions. We haven’t suffered any losses yet, so if they surrender early, I won’t demand anything unreasonable.

If they surrender early, that is.

“20 of our ranks will be joining you in battle. The mud-scaled tribe and the harpies will provide logistical support. The shell tribe will provide 10, and the long-tailed tribe will probably be able to provide at least 30. The fang tribe will also be able to provide 30. As for the minotaurs, unfortunately, they won’t be joining,” Nikea said.

“They won’t be joining?” I asked.

“They agreed to fight against the humans not the demihumans.”

Ah, a loop hole. And here I thought they were brainless.

We don’t have a slave-master relationship, so I guess I’ll have to let this one go.

“Fine. It was short noticed, after all,” I said.

“Sorry,” Nikea said.

“I’m not blaming you.”

I have no intentions of pushing everything onto Nikea. Opposition is to be expected. After all, I’m sure they’d want to avoid me monopolizing all of the authority.

Those who have been my subordinates for a long time like the goblins of the Gi Village might not mind, but the demihumans who have only just met me recently would surely find it hard to trust me.

Moreover, just supporting the food supplies of the current army is clearly no easy task. There are 140 goblins and 90 demihumans, that’s 230 all-in-all.

The werewolves and the gray wolves of the fang tribe are supposed to add more to that number to boot. Depending on how the centaurs fight, we could be the ones disadvantaged.

“What are the odds of the centaurs running to elven territory?” I asked.

It’s necessary to know exactly how far this battle can go. Otherwise, we might end up getting dragged around.

“...Can’t say it’s zero,” Nikea closed her eyes as she became thoughtful. “The home of the centaurs is to the west. They live closest to the elves, so...”

“If the battle goes to them, you won’t be able to fight since they’re your benefactors?”

Nikea wordlessly nodded.

“Then we’ll have to settle the battle before they can escape to the elven territory,” I said.

“We’ll have to take them from the back then. And then, on top of that, stop them in their tracks,” Nikea said.

Right. If we can do that, we can surround them.

They’ll probably surrender in that case.

“Have the fang tribe and the long-tailed tribe attack from the back. I will stop them,” I said.

“That’s a dangerous role, but...” Nikea shook her head. “So are the roles of the fang tribe and the long-tailed tribe. Let me take that role.”

For the sake of the future of the demihumans, Nikea volunteered to take on the dangerous role.

“Let’s have the mud-scaled tribe guide us to the centaur village.”

The overall plan has been decided. We’ll suppress the centaurs before they enter the elven region, surround them, and then force them into submission. If they refuse, well, we’ll just have to cut off their leader’s neck.

I’d rather not wipe them out though.

“The centaurs number 500 all-in-all, but about 400 of those can fight,” Nikea said.

That’s a lot. If they were human, that number would at least be halved because of the women and the children.

“Most of them are hunters and their women are just strong as their men.”

So everyone else except the elderly and the children are warriors.

Well, aren’t the goblins the same?

“We will be leaving tonight. Rukenon will take over if something happens to

me. Let us hope nothing happens,” Nikea said.

As I nodded, Nikea turned and left.

We have to hurry. If we lose her, the araneae will fall into chaos.

I went through a lot of pain to secure this foothold. I can’t lose it now.

After giving detailed instructions to the mud-scaled tribe who would be leading the way, I went to sleep along with my subordinates.



Daizos sighed as he thought about Cecil’s refusal to leave. The tax he was asking was from all of the demihumans living in the region. Naturally, Daizos was unable to procure everything by himself.

It has become custom for the demihumans to offer their special goods as tax to the elves, though when exactly the envoys would come to pick up the tax was not set in stone.

Daizos originally intended to say something about the elves in the previous meeting, but because of the goblin’s sudden announcement, he lost his chance. It wasn’t just because of the goblin’s announcement, however, he also feared that the goblins might go after them.

In truth, the goblins would not have done such a thing, but Daizos saw the goblins as savages and the elves as nobles. The way he saw it, the elves mustn’t be exposed to even the slightest bit of danger.

Unfortunately, everything Daizos did only made his worst fears inch one step closer to reality.:w

After Daizos informed the bigwigs of his village of the goblins’ possible attack, they asked him where the other demihumans were. Daizos only said that the demihumans were now obeying the goblins.

The demihumans and the goblins might have been together under the pretense of a united front against the humans, but as Daizos saw it, the demihumans have essentially been annexed. The person responsible for that was none other than Nikea.

The descendants who owned the lands farthest to the east. The same

descendants who yearned for the lands the orcs ruled, that once proud tribe. Ever since Nikea became chief they changed, and now they have even colluded with the goblins.

He couldn't accept it.

But right now there was a more pressing issue: how could he send the elves home? If they stayed here, they would surely be caught in the war. No matter how much Daizos thought, he couldn't come up with a way to convince them to leave.

—What should I do?

“Chief.”

When he looked up, one of the young men of the village was before him.

“Dakitania, what's the matter?” Daizos asked, a little annoyed because his thoughts were disturbed.

“Forgive my frankness, but we can't win even if we defend.”

In response to that blunt statement, Daizos didn't explode in anger but instead bitterly smiled. Daizos was man enough to hear opinions contrary his own without getting mad.

“Indeed,” Daizos agreed. “Is that all you wanted to say?”

“No,” the young centaur said. “Since we'd lose defending, how about attacking?”

“Attack, huh.”

Daizos became thoughtful.

“We're fighting goblins, right? Then they'll probably try to overwhelm us with their numbers,” the young centaur added.

The goblins did use that tactic once. That was back when there were still goblins left around the village.

“The other descendants of the crystals will be fighting too. The araneae are the goblins' allies,” Daizos said.

“Even then, I find it hard to imagine we'd lose a battle on the plains,” the

young man said.

The fang tribe had similar patches of flatlands in their forests. Those patches of flatlands existed here too.

“We could meet the enemy in those places,” the young centaur said.

The odds of losing were indeed much smaller if they launched an offense on the plains.

“But the enemies are goblins. We’re dead if they catch us.”

“If the other descendants see their cruelty, I’m sure they’ll open their eyes.”

Daizos was shocked to hear the young centaur, Dakitania’s, words.

“You thought that far ahead, huh.”

“We are the most worthy to succeed Lord Gurfia’s will. That’s what I believe.”

The republic of the demihumans

Nikea was trying to use the goblins to make that a reality, but Dakitania would show them that the goblins were too dangerous to be trusted. They might die doing so, but it was worth it.

“Forgive me,” Daizos said. “I should be protecting you, and yet, here I am giving an order like this.”

Why? Daizos asked to the heavens. Why do the gods who created us, the god of wind and the god of earth, make us suffer so?

Daizos looked at the young centaur. “I order you, Dakitania, for the sake of our benefactors, for the sake of our tribe, stop the invaders!”

“As you command, my chief. I will accomplish this duty even at the cost of my life.”

Dakitania buried his spear into the ground as he bowed deeply to Daizos.

Chapter 117: Battle on the Meadows

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	45
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

I split the horde into two. One was led by me, while the other I left in Gi Za Zakuend’s hands.

The centaur village was situated west of the araneae village. Their houses were built with trees and animal hide, and they numbered almost 500. As a tribe, they are known for their hunting and their ability to process iron.

Orcs and goblins once lived near their village, but they drove them away. Daizos’ grandfather is said to be a great warrior who slayed many goblins by himself.

The centaurs apparently traded their iron with the elves. That was one of the reasons why they were situated so closely to them.

The centaurs are renowned for hunting with their bows and spears. Their spears are said to be no weaker than a humans’, and their bows are said to be the strongest among the demihumans.

The centaurs’ unique skill was ‘Herculean Strength’. When a centaur reached

the chief class, the Herculean Strength skill would be able to bolster one's strength so much that he would be able to crush a rock crab barehanded.

"In other words, they are one annoying bunch," the youth of the mud-scaled tribe leading the way said.

It's been three days since we left, yet the youth's mouth showed no signs of stopping.

The members of the mud-scaled tribe were able to swim through dirt. Seeing this youth dig through the earth like it was swimming with only its head out really left one speechless.

"From here on there'll be tall grass everywhere, so please be careful. The centaurs are very near."

We've been moving on bare land all this time, so it was easy to see the mud-scaled youth, but in a place flourishing with tall grass, there's a chance we might lose sight of him.

Pushing aside the tall grass, we followed after the mud-scaled youth.

Well, this isn't so bad. As long as we pay attention, we should be alright.

"Gi Ba go scout the path ahead," I ordered.

Gi Ba left after bowing.

The tall grass blocked my vision, so I couldn't see what was up ahead. With the situation like this, I ordered the goblins to form three-man cells and scatter, paying careful attention to the surroundings.

We proceeded like that, while I made sure that no one strayed off. Halfway through the meadow, someone yelled from up ahead.

It was Gi Ba.

"Enemy!" He yelled.

Immediately, I drew my sword and ordered my men. "Secure the periphery! Take down anyone who comes!"

A centaur came and swung his spear. My sword clashed with his spear, and while I managed to flick it away, it was heavy. Saying that their spears were no

less heavier than a human's was not an exaggeration.

The centaurs came one after another. Their bodies were big. The bottom part was horse, while the upper part was man. They were all either as big or bigger than me.

The centaur in front of me tried to kick me with his hooves, but I took a step back and swung my sword.

As our attacks passed by each other, the centaur turned around and disappeared into the sea of grass.

"Yell if you see an enemy approach!"

This land is a handicap, a big handicap

Plucking off one of the tall grass, I closed my eyes and thought of the worst possible outcome.

If a flaming arrow were to land in this sea of grass, where there were no plants or vegetations to wet the land, what would happen?

We would be a horde of sitting ducks in hell, that's what.

I don't know what they're aiming for, but... It would be best to prepare for the worst.

After ordering the goblins to spread out, I wielded my sword again.

This terrain suits the centaur. We're already halfway through the meadow. If we stop here, we'll be sitting ducks for the enemy to pick off. Who would've thought the enemy would actually attack? We have to get out of here.

If we stop moving, the situation will only get worse.

Goblins and centaurs cried out alternately from the back.

Should we huddle up and move together, or would it be better to scatter and make a run for the meadow's border?

"Split off into three man cells! Make a run for the meadow's border!"

The enemy probably intends to stop us here. We need to avoid that at all costs. If we let things go as they want, the battle will eventually flow their way.

Even if it's by force, we have to get back the initiative.

"Run for the border, but if anyone gets in your way, kill them!"

The main goal is to get out, but if you can take down someone along the way, then you might as well.

"Run!!"

At my command, goblins and araneae alike made a run for the border.



"What!? The goblins scattered?" The young leader of the centaur attack force, Dakitania, looked down on the battle from high ground. "Were they simply unable to endure our attacks, or are they aiming for something?"

Dakitania became thoughtful, but regardless how much he pondered, he couldn't figure out what the enemy was thinking.

"...Let's stop. There's no way to figure out what the enemy is thinking. Besides, this isn't a bad thing for us. Since they're scattered, we'll just pick them off!"

Dakitania drew his bow and shot an arrow to the sky.

"I'm going out! We'll kill as many as we can."

The arrow cried in the sky.

That was the signal for the centaurs hiding to make their move.

The excitement of the hunt filled Dakitania, drawing a smile on his lips. He rushed down from high ground and entered the meadows. There would be no order to this battle, but that didn't matter. It was impossible for the centaurs to lose in a one-on-one battle against the goblins.

The angry voices of the goblins and the centaurs filled the land. At first, the centaurs seemed to have the upper hand, but as time went on, the screams of the centaurs grew more and more. Things did not go the way Dakitania hoped it would.

Dakitania thrust his spear in a hooking motion at the goblin he encountered, wounding the goblin's shoulder.

“NUuoO!”

He followed up with a kick, but the goblin managed to dodge and even strike back. Dakitania turned around and ran into the sea of grass. Something bitter filled his mouth.

He couldn't kill the goblin he encountered earlier either. They somehow managed to protect their vitals each time. Seeing the goblins move like that made Dakitania draw could sweat.

“This isn't how it was supposed to be!” He complained.

Because he was young he couldn't understand that he had made a mistake, so he went to look for another prey.

This time he found a red goblin accompanied by three others.

“A commander!? I'll be taking your neck!”

Dakitania thrust his spear at the red goblin.

“Attack when he's open,” the red goblin said to a goblin near him. That goblin charged toward Dakitania.

“Impudent!” Dakitania spat.

On the red goblin's hands were a spear and a sword. The red goblin threw his spear at Dakitania, and then he lowered his body and charged toward Dakitania with his sword. The spear the red goblin threw was surprisingly accurate, so Dakitania had no choice but to block it with his spear.

“Naive!” The red goblin said as he swung his sword. Blood gushed out of Dakitania's side.

“Ku!”

Dakitania stifled the cry leaking out from his mouth. He had to recover himself and fight, but unfortunately for him, the three goblins had been waiting. They simultaneously charged at him. Fortunately, Dakitania managed to fend off their attack with a swing of his spear before disappearing into the sea of grass again.

Dakitania was drenched in his own blood. He looked around him as he ran

through the meadow, but the goblins didn't follow. He thought the goblins would be easy, but the goblins he fought just now made him drink his own blood.

"This is bad," Dakitania said.

Dakitania's plan was based on the presumption that centaurs wouldn't lose to goblins in a one-on-one fight. The fact that he was pushed this far meant that his presumption was wrong, meaning the very foundation which he formed his plan on was false.

Nocking his arrow, he shot twice to the sky.

"We have to retreat," he said.

If not, the goblins might just wipe them out. He didn't fear death, but he feared a meaningless death.

Just as he was about to leave the meadow, he happened upon a giant black goblin.

"Ah, just my luck..." Dakitania spat.

Calmly, he wielded his spear. The pressure emanating from that goblin was completely unlike that red goblin just now. A sword clad in black flames, three horns that stood in defiance of the heavens, and a tail that struck against the ground. The goblin before Dakitania looked so strong that he almost didn't look like a goblin.

"But I can't lose."

Dakitania kicked off the ground with all his strength and thrust his spear, but the black goblin easily dodged with a speed that left him shocked. Before he knew it, black flames were upon him.

The flames of the abyss cried for his death, and in one slash, Dakitania felt his life leave him.



After escaping the meadows, I checked our casualties, and I found out only 8 were wounded. No one died. In contrast, the enemy lost five of their own, and we even have a prisoner. As for the rest of the centaurs, they all ran.

Somehow, we managed to make it out of this predicament.

I tried talking to our prisoner, but he just wouldn't talk properly. He just kept spouting insults, calling us goblins savages.

"What a pain," I said, sighing.

"Umm... How about I give it a try?" Selena said.

"Alright, I'll have him travel with your group and the Araneae," I told her.

"Well, people being hostile isn't anything new," I muttered to myself.

I got depressed when I thought any future discussions with the centaurs might end up the same way. If that were to happen, I would have no choice but to thoroughly destroy them.

My lips curved into a smile as I thought of the carnage that would ensue.

No, I shook my head. The demihumans are watching my every move closely right now. I need to win their trust. There's no point in having them if they can't trust me with their life.

"Watch our prisoner," I said to a subordinate goblin before leaving to check on the wounded.

Goblins weren't the only ones who were injured. There were also araneae.

The wounded were being healed with secret medicine, but that secret medicine was actually no more than some herbs kneaded together. After being treated, those who could still walk were to walk back to the araneae village, while those who can't were to be carried by the Gaidga.

"We can leave anytime now, Your Majesty," a goblin said.

"Let's go then," I said.

The centaurs didn't move as expected. Were they trying to buy time? Or were they really thinking of fighting us head on? Whichever it is, there were centaurs who managed to run away. They will be reporting the result of this skirmish.

I have no idea what they wanted to accomplish with so few men, but...

"So long as we crush them, all the problems will end."

Time was of the essence.

After dealing with the wounded, I ordered my subordinates to move at full speed.



Level has risen.

45 => 48

Chapter 118: Lost Path

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	48
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

The shaman, Gi Za Zakuend, stifled his yawn as he looked at the empty path ahead. He thought for sure the enemy would attack them, but no one came. That being the case, his attention naturally went to the demihumans traveling with him.

“I thought for sure they’d attack us instead of the king. Hmm... maybe they really are trying to run away,” Gi Za muttered.

Gi Za has been studying the araneae’s skill since they arrived at the araneae village. What properties does it have? How is it woven? Gi Za dragged Selena with him to ask those questions, and the araneae could not say no. Every one of them diligently answered his questions. Because of that Gi Za managed to spend his days immersed in his research. But now he was having some doubts about this expedition.

The king expected the enemy to run, but from Gi Za’s interactions with the araneae, there were unexpectedly few araneae who were as wise as Nikea. Most of them seemed to detest the goblins, finding them beneath them. The

other demihumans probably felt the same. If so, then the centaurs would be most likely to attack than to run.

But contrary to Gi Za's expectation, the enemy didn't come. Perhaps they attacked the king's horde instead, but there was nothing to worry about, as the king would easily be able to subjugate them.

There were roughly 80 goblins and demihumans following Gi Za. Gi Jii was his assistant, but the mission of delivering this horde to the centaurs' doorsteps fell on him.

They had split the horde because there were just too many of them to easily traverse the forest, but in the end, there were still too many. Gi Za sighed.

The rizalat and the werewolves had already gone ahead as their mission was to keep the centaurs from running away.

Accompanying Gi Za were the shell tribe, the Papirsags led by Luther. Luther was not walking on his own legs and was instead riding on a beast, a turtle four times the size of a goblin.

The ancient beast warrior, Gi Gi Orudo, looked with envy at Luther's mount. It was supposedly a turtle, but it moved quite fast. The ivies growing on its body seemed to be aiding its movements. Gi Za's eyes dazzled as he looked with curiosity at those ivies.

Sensing his gaze, Luther moved up to the middle of the horde beside Gi Za.

"Is something the matter?" He bluntly asked.

Gi Za honestly nodded. "I'm interested in that turtle. Or more specifically, those ivies. Why is it helping the turtle move? Is it magic? A magic we goblins do not know of, or perhaps... a skill. If it's none of these, then I would truly appreciate it if you could enlighten me! In fact, if you don't mind, I'd appreciate it if you could also tell me about the other demihumans or perhaps even the magic of the elves!"

Before Luther knew it, Gi Za had already climbed up his turtle.

Gi Za's fervor for the unknown left Luther's mouth open.

"H-How about you ask one at a time first," Luther said.

“Alright,” Gi Za agreed.

If the generals act cordially toward each other, it’s only natural that the subordinates would follow suit, so it should come as no surprise when the curious goblins mustered their courage to strike up a conversation with the demihumans. At first, both parties were awkward, but gradually, the goblins and the demihumans warmed up to each other.

“What? Your beasts eat meat, while you eat grass!?” Dashka of Gaidga was shocked.

The demihumans apparently ate grass, while the beasts they tamed ate meat.

“Hey, is it true that goblins can see in the dark?” A demihuman asked.

“That’s right. In fact, it’s actually better for me to use my bow in the night than in the day. The chiefs don’t seem to care though. My concentration is still lacking,” Ru Rou of Ganra said.

The only one who seemed troubled was Gi Jii, who had to follow the demihuman of the mud-scaled tribe.



The centaurs returned to their village defeated. When Daizos heard their report and found out that Dakinia had died, he went back to his room after calming down the others, then he quietly cried by himself.

“Chief!” A centaur yelled as he hurriedly entered Daizos’ room.

His house was being lent out to the elves, so the house he was using now was borrowed from another centaur. Daizos’ brows raised up when he heard the report of the centaur.

“Nikea came?” Daizos took his spear and exited his room to meet Nikea.

“...You dare show your face?” He said to Nikea..

Daizos’ anger was almost past its boiling point. It seemed like he was barely able to keep himself from thrusting his spear into her.

“I came to talk, but... I see. Since you didn’t come from your house, then that must mean....” Nikea said.

Despite arrows and Daizos' spear being pointed at her, Nikea was as calm as spring rain.

"This is troubling. At this rate, the elves will be caught up in the war," Nikea said.

"This is your fault!" Daizos yelled.

Contrast to Nikea's composure, Daizos was fuming.

"I intended to talk about the elves at the meeting, but you had to go and invite some goblin! Because of you the meeting was a mess. Form an alliance to fight the humans? Bullshit! You should've known there's no way we would fight with some goblin!" DAizos yelled.

"Why?" Nikea asked. "Do you intend to say that it's because they're savages?"

"Isn't that obvious? Because of them..."

Daizos couldn't say the words after that. That was probably because of his pride as chief. The one who ordered the centaurs to attack was none other than him, after all. Not to mention, blaming the goblins for their defeat would only shame the dead.

Somehow somehow Daizos managed to calm his seething anger and thrust his spear into the ground.

"Lord Daizos," Nikea said but the words wouldn't come out. Resolving herself, she opened her mouth again, repeating what she said a while ago. "...Let's talk. Lord Daizos, the elves must not be caught in this war. We should still be able to..."

"What right do you have to say that!? Araneae! Was it not you who colluded with the goblins!?" Daizos pulled out his spear and ordered his people. "Lock her up! But don't hurt her. We are the proud centaurs, act accordingly."

Afterwards, Daizos locked himself in his room again.

He pondered on Nikea's words.

"I..."



We moved onwards, going as fast as we could while keeping wary of our surroundings. Nikea is bound to encounter trouble as she's tasked with keeping the centaurs from running. Therefore, we need to quickly surround the centaurs and lighten the load on her and the rest of the advance group.

Despite our efforts to stay on guard, however, the centaurs never attacked again.

Are they not coming?

The goblins are positioned on all directions. With how fast we're going, the goblins are bound to be get tired. The elf, Selena, talked to the centaur, but while the centaur didn't spit out insults, he never said anything either.

It's also possible he just doesn't know anything.

"Boss, aren't, we going, too fast?" Shumea asked, huffing and puffing.

When I turned around, the normal class goblins were similarly exhausted.

Can't be helped, we have to go slower.

—Damn it, am I agitated? Me?

I finally managed to find a partner, and yet now, I'm about to lose her. She asked for it herself, I know, but... Should have I stopped her?

Uneasiness burned in my chest as I looked up ahead. Please be safe, I prayed.

I don't think she's one to do anything rash.

But, still. I don't think the enemy is going to act as we expect. They already ambushed us back in the meadows, so they must have something under their sleeves.

"Boss, can I have a moment?" Shumea asked.

"What?" I said.

It wasn't my intention, but my words came out brusque.

Shumea clicked her tongue at the way I talked.

"I don't think it'll help even if I tell you not to hurry, but how about changing

your perspective?” Shumea said.

Change my perspective?

“Isn’t the reason you’re worried about that demihuman pretty much because you doubt her strength?” Shumea pointed out.

I see... But still.

“You wrote this script with her, right? Then all you have to do is play it out. Worrying won’t help, so cheer up,” Shumea said with a laugh.

Somehow, her words calmed me down.

“...Now that you mention it,” I said.

“Right, right,” she said.

It seems my panicking also affected the other goblins.

Taking a deep breath, I slowed down my pace.

“As expected of you, Boss,” Shumea said.

“Thank you. I’ll be counting on you again if anything happens,” I said.

“It would be great if you could just say thank you a bit more kindly though,” she said.

Does it matter if I speak kindly? Maybe she’s just making fun of me. Regardless, I could only click my tongue in response.

Two days later, we arrived at the centaur village.

Contrary my expectations, the centaurs fortified their defenses and readied themselves for battle.



Just when she thought she would be able to leave the tower, she was told to go to the office of domestic affairs.

Reshia was furious at those orders, but despite that she didn’t show her displeasure. If only the goblin king were here, she could complain as much as she wanted to him, and it wouldn’t be pointless.

As for why...

“He won’t get mad, he won’t be agitated, he’ll even ask for my opinion on all sorts of matters, and when it’s time to act, he’ll act quickly,” Reshia quietly grumbled to herself.

Eventually, it occurred to her that she couldn’t think of a single bad side to the goblin king.

“Sigh... this isn’t good. It’s said that only the good times will be remembered, but...” As Reshia sighed, she thought of that figure who stretched out his hand and tried to save her.

“I’m sure he’s alive.”

Lifting up her head, she looked at the gaudy door made of gold and silver.

Thinking to herself of how ostentatious the door was, Reshia opened the door.

“Oh, if it isn’t the saint. Thank you for coming.”

Inside the room was a fat man who made the chair he sat on seem small. This was none other than the lord in charge of the office of domestic affairs. A man who was promoted solely due to his status as count.

The man’s eyes followed Reshia’s neckline down to her chest as he brushed her waist gently without reservation.

Goosebumps broke out all over Reshia.

“Please enter,” the man said.

There was a guard by the door, so it should be safe. Thinking that, Reshia sat down on the sofa, opposite the man over a short table. The man’s cologne was so strong that she could smell it despite their distance.

Should I just go back? Reshia wondered, but she shook the thought off and presented a sheet of paper to the man.

A few days ago she reported the results of her visit to the slums. At that time, she requested for the government to feed the poor rice once every three days, along with other things that could be done to improve their lives. Unfortunately, while Reshia wanted to get to the point as soon as possible, the man’s self-introduction never seemed to end.

“Which is why my Count Household...”

Reshia has been expressionless since halfway through, but the man shamelessly continued to boast of himself. Because of that Reshia couldn't help but compare the man to the goblin king.

If this were the king, he would surely go straight to the point instead of meandering needlessly like this. If the king doesn't want to, he'd say it. If he wants to, he'd say it too. He wouldn't waste time.

When Reshia inadvertently sighed, the count finally noticed.

“Oh, it seems this topic is boring the saint,” the count said.

“No... About the proposal, do you think it would be possible to implement it?” Reshia said.

The count frowned upon hearing Reshia speak only of what she came here to do.

“Unfortunately, it's impossible to feed the poor rice once every three days. Any help on the slum is impossible as well. The country needs all the resources it can get to subjugate the bandits in the north and to continue the war in the south... Also, this is just between us, but there's also the colonial city being built in the west,” the count said.

Reshia didn't know if the man said that last tidbit because he trusted her, but regardless, it seemed there would be more wars. Though there shouldn't be anything else but forest over there. When Reshia thought of that, the iron-armed knight's stern flashed through her mind.

“A colonial city in the west?”

“Lord Gowen persistently asked his highness for it, it seems.”

They really intend to go to war, she thought.

Would the king just quietly watch them build that? Reshia didn't think so.

“Thank you for your time, it was a meaningful discussion,” Reshia excused herself.

“Won't you stay a bit longer? I have some delicious black tea,” the count said.

“No, please excuse me,” Reshia said, standing up and then turning heel to leave the room even a moment sooner.

The count clicked his tongue as he watched Reshia hastily leave.

Chapter 119: Daizos

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	48
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

For the first time, I experienced the difficulty of reconnaissance in a war between different races.

In a battle between humans or goblins, it is simple enough for one to slip into the crowd and appear like everyone else, but that’s not possible in a battle between two different races. After all, we look completely different from each other. It simply isn’t possible. Even the harpy scouts aren’t able to close in on the centaur village as their archers could easily shoot them down.

The mud-scaled tribe were already working as messengers between our group and the advance group consisting of the long-tailed tribe (rizalat) and the fang tribe (werewolves), so they weren’t an option.

As I watched the scene before me, I became thoughtful.

“Why are they closing themselves off here?”

Numerous tents had been put up in the middle of the meadows, around which were wooden sticks sticking out from the ground, probably meant for

defense. Inside were centaurs wielding wooden shields reinforced with iron. This was the centaur village.

“Fighting on the meadows is supposed to be their specialty.”

I don’t understand. The forest isn’t even that far, it’s just about 500 meters away.

But even if they don’t want to run to the forest, they should be wanting a large area to exhibit their superior mobility. The greatest advantage of mobility is the ability to repeatedly send out killing moves.

“Yushika, you sure they’re not hiding anywhere?” I asked.

The harpy chief shrugged her shoulders as she chuckled. “Yep. Even the mud-scaled tribe says they don’t see anything. You sure you’re not just being too cautious? They just couldn’t run, that’s all.”

They just couldn’t run?

But why? Is it really just because they look down on us?

I’d really like something more concrete, but we can’t wait here forever. We’ve already mostly surrounded them and the path to the elves has already been cut off by the fang tribe and the long-tailed tribe. Gi Za and his horde of goblins and demihumans is also in position.

The only thing unexpected is that Nikea got herself caught. Or is that a part of her plans too?

“Yushika, I need to send a messenger to the centaurs,” I asked.

“Can we expect extra compensation for the risk?” Yushika smiled seductively.

“I’ll give you as much as you want,” I decided.

After hearing my answer, Yushika flew away.



Dodging the arrows flying toward her, Yushika threw a wooden rod wrapped in white cloth toward the centaur village. In a war between demihumans, this was the way demihumans requested for a temporary ceasefire.

After seeing that the arrows have stopped coming, Yushika flew down.

Yushika gradually approached the ground until she finally landed.

She smiled as usual at the centaurs surrounding her. "Where is Lord Daizos? Or has the centaurs fallen so low that they can't even negotiate anymore?"

Many of the centaurs frowned at her words, clearly angry, but they let it slide. Before long the centaurs made way and Daizos approached her.

"What did you come for?" He asked.

"I'm here as a messenger," Yushika said, bowing respectfully.

Daizos raised his brows. "Fine. I'll hear you out."

Entering the second biggest house in the village, Yushika gave Daizos the goblin king's message.

The conditions the king gave could be said to be exceptional.

One, if the centaurs surrender, they must not ask for compensation for any damages incurred.

Two, they must release Nikea.

Three, they must join the united front against the humans.

Those were the three conditions the king gave, yet Daizos still refused to show agreement.

"Exactly what are you intending to do?" Daizos asked.

"Wow, you're actually going to remain stubborn despite the predicament you're in?" Yushika said, half fed up of Daizos' attitude, but Daizos refused to give in.

"We won't lose to some goblins."

"And what about the other descendants? Hmm? The fangs, the long-tailed ones, the shells, the araneae? You realize they're serious about this war, right?"

"Fallen ones."

"Don't you mean you were just too short-sighted?"

"...Perhaps."

Daizos bitterly smiled as Yushika tried to persuade him. All this time they've

been friends, and yet now, they were enemies. Nothing was more painful than losing a friend because of war.

Eventually, Yushika got fed up with trying to persuade Daizos and she asked.

“I know I’m stepping over a line with this one, but why? Why do you hate the goblins so much? I know you said they’re savages, but I don’t think that’s all there is to this,” Yushika said.

Daizos bitterly smiled when he saw Yushika take off that chiefly mask of hers to reveal her truer side: a friend.

“Since you’re going that far, I won’t answer you as chief anymore but as Daizos. I respect the elves. I respect their form, their extravagance aside. The goblins do not have that. I fear that if we join them, our world which has been centered around the elves for so long will crumble,” Daizos solemnly said.

He continued. “I can’t forgive that. I can’t forgive them baring their fangs on the elves who gave us the land we live on and the technology to live.”

“That’s not necessarily the case though. Humans and elves are different, after all.”

“No, they will definitely bare their fangs. Because the elves are corrupted,” Daizos seemed to be scorning himself as he said that.

Yushika was speechless.

“Despite that you’re still going to fight for them?” She asked after a pause.

“The blood of my great-grandfather who swore an oath to the elves flows in my veins. The gratitude handed down generation after generation until me, the very loyalty that permeates us will become nothing more than a lie. I can’t betray them.”

Yushika was greatly troubled by the man in front of her who was saying he would protect the elves despite knowing of their corruption. She wanted to shout at him and call him stubborn, but she wouldn’t be able to change his mind that way. Daizos has probably thought hard about this already.

“...Lord Nikea told me this awhile ago. We can still make it if we talk with the goblin king. I don’t know if you’ve noticed it, but the elves are staying in the

village. They came to collect the tax. Nikea said I should talk to the goblin king to ensure their safety.”

That’s why you didn’t run. No, that’s why you couldn’t run.

“The goblins are no foreigners to negotiations,” Yushika said, pointing out the obvious flaw in his argument.

“No, that goblin will surely use the elves. It’s not greed, but for the goblin king to realize his goals, he needs as many allies he can get,” Daizos said.

And so they will lead even the elves into chaos and ruin?

Daizos continued. “The demon children of chaos, the goblins... The burden they carry is too heavy for us who once dreamed.”

Yushika felt her chest ache when she saw Daizos’ lonely smile. Gurfia was his brother. He was his pride and joy, but before he knew it, he was a ghost, who threatened the demihumans.

“...What do you intend to do about the elves?” Yushika asked.

“I will protect them. To protect them is my will as chief. But even I, as Daizos, believe that they should be protected,” Daizos said.

Yushika stared at Daizos when he pointed out those two faint yet important wills. As a demihuman, Daizos was still young. In human age, he would be in his 30s to 40s, but the position of chief carried with it much trouble.

“I’ve also thought of throwing away this weight on my shoulders many times,” Daizos smiled.

That was not the smile of a happy man, however, but the smile of a man who has resolved himself.

“But if I throw it away, I won’t be me anymore. That’s why I will fight the goblins,” he said.

Finally, Yushika realized that there was no way to persuade the man.

“You’re a fool, Daizos.” Yushika said.

“I think so too,” he said.

Silence filled the room after that, as Yushika didn’t know what to say. When

Daizos finally spoke, he was back to being a chief.

“Sorry for complaining. Please forget it... Daizos’ time has ended. From here on out, I will make a decision as chief of the centaurs. Lord Yushika, I shall return Lord Nikea. Please inform the goblin king I wish to challenge him to a duel,” Daizos said.

“A duel?” Yushika asked, unable to understand.

Daizos nodded. “If I win, he must withdraws his troops posthaste. If he wins, however, the centaurs will surrender.”

“You intend to die?” Yushika asked.

“I told you before, I won’t lose to some goblin. I simply intend to minimize casualties on both sides. There is nothing more to it,” he said.

“There’s no guarantee that goblin king will accept it.”

“Then please persuade him. For the sake of protecting the demihumans, and for the sake of protecting your beloved customers.”

“...You’re selfish, you know.”

“Centaurs are like that.”

“...Where is Nikea?”

“I’ll have her brought at once.”

After Nikea arrived, Yushika walked away with her.

As they walked, Yushika passed by Daizos, uttering some last words to a friend she would no longer be seeing from today onwards.

“Farewell, my dearest,” she said.

“Farewell, my dearest neighbor,” Daizos said back.

A bid of farewell between two friends.



After confirming that Nikea was safe, I listened to Yushika’s report.

“A duel, hmm...”

Indeed, that would probably be the best way to conclude this war.

“I’ll accept it.”

I want to minimize the casualties too.

“Also... Apparently, there are elven messengers staying at the centaur village. That’s why the centaurs couldn’t move.”

Yushika wasn’t wearing her usual smile when she said that. Her eyes were filled with resolve as she looked at me.

“I see...”

How to deal with those? I should probably send them off, but I could also use them to negotiate with the elves. To do that though, I’ll need to ensure their safety enough to convince the demihumans.

“We can’t involve the elves in the war,” I said.

If it were only the goblins, it wouldn’t matter much, but the demihumans are with me too.

“There is no reason for Your Highness to personally go out and fight that duel,” Gi Za said. “Let me go instead. There is no reason to risk it.”

Indeed, there’s no reason to risk it. The enemy could pull something just like that time with Mido.

But he wanted a duel with me.

I can’t run away, not as king.

“As I’ve said once, I am the king. I cannot run away from these challenges. Even if it is dangerous, I can’t run. Or else how could I ever be fit to sit in my throne?”

“...I understand,” Gi Za said reluctantly.

“Bring the prisoner,” I said.

We will be releasing that young centaur we caught on the day of the duel.

“Let’s settle this quickly.”

The next day, I accepted the duel.



Under the eyes of goblins and demihumans, two men stepped forward.

One was the centaur chief, the other was the goblin king. In their hands were a spear and a long sword, respectively; and serving as their referee was a member of the harpy tribe.

“This war shall be settled with this duel!”

At those words, the two men nodded. They raised their swords and swore.

“Glory and compensation to the victor!”

“Glory and peace to the defeated!”

No one disagreed to the words cried out.

“Swear to the God of Duels, Yul Basta!”

The two men knocked their weapons at the sound of that sonorous voice.

The duel had begun.

The centaur thrust his spear with all of his strength. That spear was truly capable of crushing rocks, and not even the goblin king could come out unscathed under its might, but the goblin king parried that spear and counterattacked, his sword clad in the flames of the underworld goddess. Those flames that burned in the abyss burned fiercely with the fervor of the goblin king.

The goblin king’s foot bore into the ground, then following the shortest route with the fastest speed, his sword reached for the centaur chief’s legs.

The centaur foresaw what the goblin king intended, so he dodged those flames of hell with the least movement needed and attacked again. If one thrust could not take down the goblin king, then he would thrust a second, no, a third even. And so, three times did the spear struck out, each thrust brimming with the power to wound fatally.

Still, the goblin king dodged those worthy attacks; and in that narrow opening that opened up behind them, the goblin king forced his blade in, cutting toward the arms from below. Any monster would have had its arm lopped off by that

attack, but the centaur chief used its quick legs to jump back and retreat.

The two warriors separated. Inwardly, they admired each other's skill. Unfortunately, they were enemies, and thus, there would be no greater way to show the respect they felt but to cut at each other.

The first to step forward was the goblin king. He needed to close in on the centaur quickly to negate the centaur's advantage in reach. Ether exploded behind the goblin king's back. At the same time, he used the resulting acceleration to quickly close in on the centaur. Suddenly, he was right before the centaur. In no time at all, his sword, clad in black flames, was swinging for the centaur. It came swinging at a speed far beyond normal. It was so fast that any other centaur would have had its neck cut off.

To the goblin king's surprise, what resounded next was not the sound of a decapitated head touching the ground, but the sound of clanging iron. Without even time to spare for his ears to ring, the goblin king fell to the ground. Right after, a great wind blew with the centaur's spear as it swept toward the goblin king. That attack that could tear through flesh and crush bones cut through the empty air where the goblin king should've been before returning to the centaur's hands.

The centaur attacked again, but the goblin king had already fixed his posture and was able to receive his attack.

The fight continued like that, going back and forth.

Meanwhile, while the demihuman and the king were fighting, Gi Za took his druids and moved.

"The moment the king secures victory, we shall attack the centaur village," Gi Za said.

After giving instructions, Gi Za ordered his men to go somewhere they can't be seen.

When Luther of the shell-tribe saw what was happening, he called out.

"What are you doing, Lord Gi Za?" He asked.

"Preparing for war," Gi Za replied.

“The war will end with this. Whether in victory, or in defeat,” Luther said.

Gi Za shook his head. It was far too unreasonable. “The king will win. There is no other path. But do you truly believe the centaurs would so willingly surrender? I do not! Those who refuse to put down their spears will hurt the king’s victory. To perfect the king’s victory, we, his subordinates, must move.”

The moment the king won, Gi Za and his horde would move in to capture the village. His preparations were for that. Just waiting for the centaur to surrender was a waste of luck and time.

“That is wrong,” Luther said. “To quietly watch your king win is giving glory to your king’s victory.”

Halfway through his speech, Luther was shocked. So much so that he wondered whether this goblin was truly the same goblin he was talking to awhile ago. On the way to the centaur village, he was so innocent, asking about their tradition, their beasts, and their skills. But now, all of that innocence was gone. In its place was a calm man with only one objective: to attain victory. Even the gaze this goblin looked at him had changed. Before it was filled with curiosity. Now, it was cold and calculating, as if in this world there were only two types of people: ally or foe.

“To increase the odds of victory even one bit more is my duty. I have no intention of becoming a retainer who is only capable of relying on the king!”

“Then what about the feelings of the centaurs? They are quietly watching this battle. They have left everything to the judgment of the God of Duels.”

Gi Za sneered and shook his head. “It is precisely because you rely on gods that you have fallen... I, no, we do not rely on gods. Our victory is solely due to our king!”

The goblins had no gods. The humans, the demihumans, even the elves might have gods, but the goblins had none. Mother Deetna had already ceased in the abyss, and Altesia, who ruled the underworld, was not their patron. So when Gi Za heard of the demihumans and the elves’ faith, he could only doubt the gods more.

From where did the goblins hail, and to where shall they go?

To live in this world without a god was to be severed from the world.

How lonely is it to live in the world without anyone to revere? Lost and forlorn children thrown out into the world alone.

But.

Fortune turned and the king appeared before them. Now, they no longer had to face that solitude alone.

Our king who is like a god.

We have no gods, but our king stands strong with us. If so, if so then... how can we devote ourselves to the king?

“Do you not fear the gods?” Luther asked with shaking voice.

Gi Za sneered. “Our god has long died. Therefore, we have no god, only a king.”

Though they couldn’t see it from where they were standing, cheers could be heard from the demihumans and the goblins surrounding the village.

If one listened closely, those cheers were celebrating the king’s victory.

“Go! The king has won! Take the village!”

Like that Gi Za took his horde and captured the village.



Level has risen.

48 => 53



Chapter 120: A Moving Chess Piece

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	53
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

Deafening cheers resounded all around.

On my hand was a long sword dripping with blood. Before me was the centaur chief breathing his last breaths on the ground. He was strong. His fast legs, trained specifically for hunting, and his never ending attacks made me thought I would die several times throughout the duel, but in the end what decided victory was my persistence.

He’s strong, but somehow, it feels like that strength comes from his resolve to die.

“...It’s over, huh,” he said, his voice tinged with pain.

“Seems like it,” I said.

I raised my black burning sword up. “Let me put you to rest.”

“...Wait, before that, hear me out,” he said.

“If it’s something I can do, sure,” I said.

I lowered my sword and knelt beside him.

“Promise me, you’ll ensure the safety of my tribe,” he said.

“I promise it,” I said.

Despite all the bleeding, Daizos’ lips curved up into a smile. Seeing him smile despite being in so much pain made me raise up my brows.

“As expected of a king... You, are, reliable... I have, one, more, thing... I’d like to ask. Please, don’t, push the, elves any further.”

“What do you mean?”

“I am indebted, to them. I can’t, speak ill of them, but—”

“—What is this!? What is going on!?”

I looked up upon hearing that shrill voice. What greeted me next were the graceful faces of two elves, one of which seemed high-strung while the other seemed anguished as they looked at us.

“A-a-a goblin? You actually lost to this thing!?” The high-strung of the two elves said.

Nothing was more disgraceful than the way that elf acted. Inadvertently, I narrowed my eyes at that elf’s behavior.

Daizos grabbed my arm. “I beg you! King of Goblins, do not...” But before he could finish, the last of his strength left him, and his hand powerlessly fell back to the ground.

I closed his still open eyes.

“...Unfortunately, I don’t think that’ll be possible after seeing that.”

I took my blood-smeared sword with me and approached the screaming elf.

“W-W-What!? What do you want!?” The high-strung elf asked, pointing at me as his voice cramped.

“I am the Goblin King that rules the east,” I said.

“P-Peasant, how dare you!? We are the proud and noble elves! You should be prostrating yourself before us!”

The desire to mess this elf up grew stronger. A vicious smile appeared over my lips. I wanted to swing the sword in my hand and lop off this foolish elf's head.

To think he wouldn't even give a word to the person who fought for him.

Such an act is an insult to Daizos... and to me.

"Goblin King, Lord Cecil, I believe it would be best if we send off the dead first before anything else," the other elf, who looked anguished a while ago, said.

He seems frail, but he's better off than this one.

I swung my sword to get rid of the blood and the fat before sheathing it by my waist.

"Eek! T-T-That's dirty!!!"

It was a good opportunity, so I accidentally got some on the elf's face.

Hmph, dirty, huh. Unfortunately, Daizos, it seems your death meant nothing to these elves of yours.

The better of the two elves walked up to Daizos with a sad look on his face, then he knelt down and offered a silent prayer.

"And you?" I asked to the other elf.

I didn't really want to ask, but I thought I might as well to see his response.

"W-What?" He asked.

I turned to where Daizos was to indicate that I was talking about him.

The elf's face twitched as he laughed. "Why would us elves do anything for someone the likes of him?"

I see... It seems this elf is really stupid. Relying solely on his race's status, while not even thinking the slightest bit about the demihumans. The more I think about it, the more pitiful Daizos becomes.

If he followed me, I could have sent him to die in a more fitting battlefield.

Instead, he fought me, lost, and at the end of his life, begged me to guarantee the safety of the elves. A pitiful end for a warrior.

What value is there to this elf who looks like he's about to collapse from my glare?

How pathetic.

"...Sorry for that. Please, let me introduce myself." After the better elf finished praying, he walked over to where I was and bowed his head. "My name is Shunan. I am the envoy tasked with making rounds on the border. This person here is Lord Cecil. He is also an envoy, but he is chief envoy, whereas I am vice-envoy. It is a pleasure to make your acquaintance."

This man is unusually polite.

"I don't mind, but..."

As I was talking, Gi Za walked over to me. The direction he came from, however, was from the direction of the centaur village.

"We have captured the village, Your Highness. There were some resistance, but we managed to suppress them. Shall we capture these elves?" He asked.

"That was quick. No, there's no need to capture them. Just bring them to the centaur chief's house," I said.

After Gi Za nodded, I walked over to Yushika, who was standing by his corpse, and called out to her.

"I want to give him a warrior's burial. Can I leave everything to you? I don't know how you people do it," I said.

"Yes... Just for today, it'll be off the books. Thank you, King of Goblins," she said.

I didn't want to see her beautiful face covered in tears, so I turned around.

I didn't have the right to say anything. After all, one of the reasons behind her sorrow was me. The words of a man like that couldn't possibly reach her.

Instead, I should be thinking of what I should be doing now. There's no time for regrets.

Stifling all weakness that sought to rise within me, I looked up ahead.

With this I've finally made all the demihumans my allies, opening the door to

the elves.

Unfortunately, I never thought the elves would be so weak. I might have expected too much, but I was informed that they sometimes go out to become adventurers, so I expected them to be a bit stronger, yet it seems my expectations were too high. Every time I think back to that elf, I get anxious.

If it's like this, I might as well just use the goblins to suppress them, but... No, I shouldn't give in to my temper. The elves are supposed to have technology we don't have. The technology to train exceptional warriors, to temper weapons, to create armor. Moreover, that vice-envoy might be someone special.

It might be worth my time to talk that to elf called Shunan.

Even if the elves are no good as warriors, they might be useful in other fronts. I need more informations. The informations I got from Selena is not enough.



The goblins and the other demihumans made camp around the centaur village. When everything had settled down, I gathered the goblins and gave them instructions on hunting and patrolling, while also prohibiting them from insulting the demihumans.

There is much to do. The other demihuman chieftains need to elect a new leader for the centaur village. Peace and order must also be maintained. That elf, Cecil, needs to be dealt with as well.

After finding the time, I called out the vice-envoy, Shunan, along with Shumea, Selena, and Nikea. The sun had already set, so the elf, Shunan, cast his light magic, Light, to light the room.

After Selena, Shumea, and Nikea introduced themselves in order, we began the meeting.

"An alliance? This is a bit sudden. Even if you tell this to me..." Shunan said after I proposed the alliance with a strong conviction.

"If you can't give a response, we will have no choice but to enter the elven villages," I said.

"...Is this a threat?" Shunan asked.

“I’ll get straight to the point. I am unhappy with the way you elves behaved this afternoon.”

Shunan frowned upon hearing that. Apparently, I hit a sore spot.

“What I have heard from the descendants of the crystals, I have seen today with my own eyes. I cannot help but feel disappointed. Especially, that man, Cecil,” I said.

“You would actually go so far? Even I cannot stay put after hearing my brethren insulted,” Shunan said.

“Oh? Then are you implying there is more to that man’s behavior other than scorn?”

“That’s...”

I shouldn’t insult them too hard, there’s no point to it. Thinking that, I stifled all my pent up irritation to keep myself from grumbling.

“Will you accept? Will you not? That is all I really want to know,” I said.

“...As of now, that is not possible. I do not have the authority to make such decisions,” Shunan said.

There was a sternness to his face now.

That’s a much better face.

What I need to know now is who has the right to make that decision and what kind of government the elves have. If their government is nothing more than some flimsy body, wherein each village makes their own decisions, then I’ll have no choice but to conquer them one at a time. Hopefully, they’ll have a situation like with the demihumans, but I doubt things will go so smoothly.

“Who has the right then?” I asked.

“The sage’s council,” he said.

So they do have a council of sorts that govern the different villages of the sylphs. Apparently, the representatives aren’t limited to representing only one village. Some of them represent more than one village.

“A council, hmm... I take it they are not always convening.”

“Yes. A meeting is held when deemed necessary, and whatever is decided is implemented to all villages.”

“Let me attend that meeting then.”

“I will have to ask my elder brother first.”

When the words ‘elder brother’ came out, Shunan cast his eyes down.

“When can you ask him?”

“From here it would take 5 days.”

“Even with the elven road?”

A look of shock appeared on Shunan’s face, then he immediately turned to Selena.

Sighing, he shook his head in resignation.

“No, with the elven road it should only take a day.”

“Then please ask that brother of yours as soon as you can. Until then, we’ll keep that man, Cecil, here in the village.”

If we let Cecil go instead, he might abandon Shunan. But if it’s this weak-looking man, he probably won’t abandon him. Putting it positively, he looks trustworthy. Negatively, he looks weak.

“What we seek is only the strength to fight back against the humans. We have no hostile intentions toward the elves,” I said.

“I... understand.”

There’s no reason to say any more than this.

This man will inform the elves what we have told him, so it’s best to keep our impressions good.

“Well then. That’ll be all tonight.”

I glanced at Selena, and timidly, she stepped forward.

“This girl was taken captive by the humans. Due to some circumstances, I am currently taking care of her. Why don’t you talk with her a bit?”

After that I stood up and left with the others.

The next day, Shunan left to request that meeting.



Westmost of the demihuman region, a five days' walk from the centaur village, was the forest known as the Rustling Forest. The wind ^{Sylphs} elves liked to name each forest they lived in.

The Tranquil Forest, the Rustling Forest, the Silent Forest, the Windy Forest, the Forest of the Lost, the Whispering Forest, there were countless forests in the region of the sylphs, but in a relatively bigger forest, in a relatively bigger village, was a meeting between six sylphs.

It has been three days since Shunan bid farewell to the Goblin King.

The six representatives of the sylphs were gathered in one building.

There was no one else in the meeting except for these six people. They were gathered around a round table, upon which was drawn a golden spiral ivy, symbolizing the wealth and advanced technology they were so proud of.

The elves lived twice as long as humans. They aged slower, accordingly. From the humans' perspective, the elves were indeed beautiful. So beautiful, in fact, that their faces are said to be carved after Mother Deetna's. This was said for both men and women.

Be that as it may, there were still individual differences.

"Why in the world would the goblins have the right to negotiate with us?" An elf by the name of Fenit, hailing from the Tranquil Forest, said. The fat on his body greatly shook as he spoke. ^{Symphoria}

"Is it true that the demihumans have fallen to the goblins?" Silver from the Forest of the Lost was dubious. He was short and plump, and as he listened to Shunan's proposal – essentially, the goblin king's proposal – a look of displeasure could be seen on his face. "It seems the demihumans need reminding who they're masters are." ^{Sheng}

"Indeed," Priena of the Silent Forest with his beautiful but cold eyes and Nash of the Whispering Forest with his slender body agreed. ^{Sinfall} ^{Jirad}

“...We could stay quiet, but then nothing would be resolved,” Shure of the Rustling Forest, Shunan’s brother, crossed his arms and frowned.

Quietly nodding was the middle-aged Falun. The forest he represented was the Windy Forest.

“But you know, Shure Forni. I don’t believe your junior brother’s words have any place in this council. Surely you don’t actually believe we would work with some goblins, do you?” Silver Sheng sneered as he looked up Shure’s face.

Shure turned to him with a face as calm as still waters. “You have no intentions of accepting the goblin’s proposal then, I take it?”

When Shure asked a second time, the one who blew up in anger was not Silver but Fenit.

His overgrown tummy shook waves as he yelled. “Enough with this bullshit!”

The middle-aged Falun was greatly perplexed at the man’s lack of grace. “...I don’t believe those words are appropriate for the noble-minded.”

“Of course,” Priena Sinfall agreed as he looked coldly at Falun. “But the same could be said for Lord Shure.”

“If this is all you have to say, I would like to request that this meeting be dismissed. Is there anyone in disagreement?” At Nash Jirad’s proposal, the meeting came to an end.

After four elves left, only Shure and Falun were left.

“What do you think?” Shure’s wise-looking face frowned a bit as he looked sharply at Falun.

“The sage’s council is not truly united. That’s basically it,” he said, sighing.

Shure nodded. “Is it exactly as Shunan said? The human threat?”

“The reports from the adventurer elves goes in line with his report. The warring kingdom, Germion, has turned its eyes on the forest.”

“...I take it victory isn’t possible unless we unite the elves then?”

“Most likely...”

The middle-aged Falun caressed his beard as he agreed.

“Then for the sake of the sylphs, I shall carry this shame.” Shure smacked his hands, and in the next moment, Shunan and some elven youths appeared.

“It is as you’ve heard,” Shunan said. “We will need to talk. Shunan, tell the Goblin King to bring his horde here.”

Shure spoke those words as calmly as he could. After Shunan and the elven youths nodded they left.

“Are you sure about this? Things might not go according to plan.” Falun said.

Shure bitterly smiled. “It is impossible for things to go exactly as you plan them. To deal with the problems that arise in one’s plan is precisely what leads to victory. I would have liked more time, however...” Shure said.

“So young yet already so brilliant. We of Gastair do not regret throwing our lots with Forni.”

shifon

“Thank you, teacher.”

“Hah, it’s been a while since I was last called that. I think I’ll begin preparations. I have to show my face in the banquet, after all.”

The remaining two members of the sage’s council stood up.

“By the way,” Falun said, remembering something as he stood up. “Your daughter... Shumelia is almost of age, I believe.”

Shure faintly smiled, but it seemed sarcastic. “She has become quite a shrew, actually. I’m not sure who she takes after.”

“It’s good to be vigorous while young. Ha ha ha!”

The next day, Shunan returned to the goblin king and extended an official invitation for him and his horde.

Chapter 121: An Invitation from the Elves

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	53
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

Shunan returned. Unexpectedly, the elves accepted us. Not just a few of us either, but the whole horde of 140 goblins.

“That went rather smoothly,” I said.

It seems suspicious, especially when I see Cecil acting the way he usually does. But I don’t think this sylph called Shunan is the type to lie.

“My elder brother, Shure, is aware of the state of the east. He knows that the humans are trying to invade the forest, so he says there’s no need for needless fighting,” Shunan said.

If that’s true, then this alliance shouldn’t take long. But I wonder... This could be a trap.

“It’s just that the other members of the Sage Council aren’t as flexible as my brother, so...” Shunan said.

I see... So he’s doing this on his own accord against the wishes of the other

elves. Well, as long as there's one tribe willing to accept us, we can manage.

We'll just have to gradually gather more support from the other tribes. I hope he doesn't mind providing us weapons and technology, as well as some manpower.

Other than that there's also the issue of what the goblins will do after the humans are defeated.

Will the goblins rule over the humans?

When it comes to ruling that includes maintaining the public order, protecting the law, and managing the government.

One way to go about things is through indirect ruling. That is to say we won't directly rule the humans but instead rely on a human to rule over them.

In other words, we would be creating a fake feudal lord to rule the humans through.

The advantage to this method is that the people won't blame us but the fake feudal lord we created.

There's also the fear of goblin rule that needs to be considered.

Goblins have never stood above humans before. If they were to suddenly stand above them, a revolt would surely occur.

Therefore, it is necessary to slowly wean the humans to goblin rule. At first, the goblins will only be used to maintain order, but gradually, they will take over the government and the law. In order to do that, however, the goblins first need to learn how to rule and govern. That is something that can only be learned from those who have created their own societies. Namely, the humans, the demihumans, and the elves.

The ones who have the most developed society are of course the humans. With a system based on trade and currency, they are undoubtedly the most prosperous race in the world. Of course, that's because they won the war. Other than that it's also because of the divine protections they have received and the workings of their heroes. But such things are merely secondary. The biggest contributor to their prosperity is their social system. In other words,

trade and currency.

When the people gather, trade occurs, causing even more people to gather. This cycle repeats itself, until eventually, a metropolis is born. The birth of a metropolis means the widening of roads and the creation of many villages nearby, creating wealth. The onset of wealth, however, is not all good. For where there is wealth, there are predators. To expel these greedy ones, who are full of lust for the forbidden fruit, it is necessary to create the military. Finally, a country is born.

By expelling the invaders and expanding the country, the territory of the humans naturally expanded. The current state of the world is precisely because of humanity's superior social system, a system the elves and the demihumans could not match.

It is not perfect, however. The increase in population and wealth will naturally lead to a disparity of wealth and status. This is directly connected to war. If not war, then at the very least, the lives of the people will be harsh. So harsh that they would have to burn themselves out just to live their lives. A painful prosperity, so to speak.

But what about the demihumans?

Of course, I don't know how it was in the past, but I can roughly guess how they are today by inferring from their current situation. By living in small villages, they are able to keep their peculiarities. Through trade they are able to form a cooperative body of sort, shallow as it may be. On the surface, their system does not seem any inferior than the humans', but is that really the case? Of course not, the demihumans are ages behind humanity. Their flimsy system can never hope of matching the entirety of humanity. Not with their bartering nor the meager scale of their trades, which are limited solely between villages. They have no currency. They do not even have tax, though because of that there is not much difference between individuals' social statuses.

Knowing this, can the demihumans possibly rule over the humans? The answer is no. They cannot. Because they are too simple.

What about the elves then?

Do they understand the concept of ruling over others? Are they able to grasp

the essence of the few ruling the multitude? Looking at Cecil, it seems as if they are only able to rely on the good graces of others, but... Let us pray that Cecil is merely an outlier and not a representative of the common elf.

“Let us go then. You will be leading the way, I take it?” I said.

“Of course,” Shunan said.

After informing Shunan that we will be leaving the next day, I gathered the goblin leaders and gave them their orders. I also thanked the demihumans for their cooperation and asked them to begin communications with the goblins to the east.

“Gi Za, stay here as relay for the meantime,” I said.

“I don’t mind, but... will you be alright without me?” Gi Za said.

He was serious.

Wryly smiling, I said, “You don’t actually think anyone would make trouble after seeing a horde this big, do you?”

“Well... That’s true.” Gi Za said after becoming thoughtful for a moment.

Gi Za’s mission is to maintain communication with the demihuman and ensure that the path to the elven territory remain unobstructed. After all, it would be troublesome if we had to retreat, only to find that the path home had been cut.

“Don’t let your guard down, though,” Gi Za said.

“I know,” I said.

He worries too much, but his loyalty is the real deal.

The next day, we departed for the elven village. I left 10 goblins with Gi Za and took the remaining 130 with me.



Hawk-Eyed Fick, Fick Barbad, was in a long while sharing a drink with his old friends in the bar at Germion Kingdom. Mill the Mage Slayer, Wyatt the Herculean, Yugil, Vitz... The people gathered were all members of Gulland’s previous expedition to the forest.

It's already been a month since they escaped from that perilous forest, and since then, they've been living their lives. But whether they were living their lives in the east or the west, they never forgot to regularly exchange information with one another.

The bars frequented by the adventurers are the same everywhere. They're chaotic, full of fervor, and the food and wine are all priced according to taste.

Atop the tables were various food lined up, while the beer mugs were all filled with ale to relieve the parched throats of these adventurers after a day's hard work.

"Thank you for gathering here today. I'm not gonna be so formal about this, but..." Wyatt the Herculean said, at which, everyone raised up their mugs. "First, a toast. For all those who couldn't make it, for all those who made it."

After knocking their mugs together, the group of adventurers started digging in at the great feast laid out over the table. The adventurers heartily drank their fill of ale, but then all eyes suddenly gathered on Mill the Mage Slayer.

"...It's lukewarm," she complained.

"A bit late to be complaining after chugging it in one go, don't you think?" Hawk-Eyed Fick remarked, causing Yugil and Vitz to laugh. It seems the mage slayer was actually a heavy drinker.

"Gulland's in the north, so it probably couldn't be helped, but it's still too bad that the White Hand of Life couldn't make it," Wyatt said.

Vitz' brows rose when he spoke about her. "Don't talk about her anymore. The food will go bad."

"Oho? And here I thought you guys were hitting it off. Weren't you always together?" Wyatt asked.

"I felt like a kid being sent to the slaughter house, you know. I was so scared I thought I'd end up turning to heresy," Vitz said, shrugging his shoulders, causing Wyatt to chuckle.

"She's on a pilgrimage right now for the on a mission's trip, but she'll come back when she's done," Yugil said.

Seeing Yugil actually open his mouth for once when he never did when they were in the forest caused Mill to do a double take.

“You can talk?” She asked.

“I just have stage fright,” Yugil said, causing the group to break out into laughter.

“I-I’m being serious,” Yugil argued, beet red, causing the group to laugh even harder.

“By the way, did you hear? The feudal lord of the western region, Lord Gowen, is apparently building a colonial city in the west,” Fick said as he wiped his teary eyes from laughing too much.

“Hmm... So they’re that much of a threat, huh. But will they really just let them build that thing?” Wyatt the Herculean rubbed his chin and wondered.

“...What’s a colonial city?” Mill asked Wyatt after drinking her fourth mug.

“A strategic base... Do you understand?” Wyatt said.

“Nope,” Mill promptly replied.

“In other words, it’s a fortress that’s also a village.” Wyatt placed a black bread on an empty plate and struck it with a fork to illustrate his point. “Generally, walls would be extended from this point to the left and to the right, building watch towers in equal spaces.”

He lined up some pig’s sausage.

“This is done to completely isolate the outside from the inside. To that end, it is usually preferred that the walls be 3 meters high. That way, if anyone tries to climb them, the soldiers would be able to pierce them with their spears. To top it all off, a canal is built along the perimeter of the walls... Good grief, this is going to be long.”

This time he lined up some pasta outside the sausages.

“Land is cultivated inside the colonial city to allow the city to be self-sufficient. It still depends on the mayor, but the taxes in colonial cities are usually lowered. As for who tills the land, it’s usually either the farmers or the soldiers who want to make some extra on the side.”

This time Wyatt piled up some salad inside the sausages. He added some Kabacho, a kind of green vegetable, some round-cut Touma, a kind of vegetable that's red and very sour, then he added some syrup on top for taste. The salad looked heavenly.

"The colonial city is equipped with defenses to protect itself while the army is away. At the same time, it also has facilities to help offensive maneuvers, ensuring that the attack is successful. These facilities were frequently used when battling the bandits in the north. Notable colonial cities include Yuyurad to the south and Sonoia to the north."

Mill emptied her sixth mug as she watched Wyatt play with his sausage.

"...Yuyurad didn't have stone walls," Mill said.

The city of Yuyurad wasn't far from the capital. Presently, it has become one of the biggest exporter of food to the capital.

"Well, when the role of the city changes, the walls would be demolished," Vitz said.

"Really?" Mill asked to Wyatt.

"Yes. Yuyurad was a colonial city 100 years ago. It was originally constructed to conquer the south and the west. Currently, it is the frontline in the war against Yotsun Hell far to the south. You've taken a fair share of quests to transport goods, right? Yuyurad is currently being used as a base while the war is waged along the Kubel River."

Wyatt bit his delicious black bread filled with Kabacho, Touma, and pig sausage.

"Mmm... Delicious," Wyatt said.

Wyatt's sausage burst out with juice and fat along with the assorted veggies. When Mill heard the sounds Wyatt made, she finally stopped drinking and ate.

"Fick, you're currently living in the south right? How is it?" Vitz asked Fick as he chewed on the aromatic chicken leg.

"Free cities usually have more of that impending danger kind of feeling, but well... That place is always flourishing with business and is always in war, so..."

Fick said.

Wyatt twined his pasta around his fork, then gulped it down with his tongue sticking out.

“There are a lot of jobs, but that just goes to show how dangerous the place is. It’s fine if you just think you’re dealing with a scuffle or two.”

“Jobs like last time sure are rare though, huh,” Yugil said as he removed the bones of his fried fish, then stuffed his mouth with its meat. The aroma of the fried fish spread within his mouth, causing him to inadvertently smile as he looked at Fick.

“There’s almost none down in the south,” Fick said.

“What about the Holy Shushunu Kingdom to the east?” Vitz asked.

After Wyatt emptied his place in no time at all, he took another bread and smiled.

“Can’t recommend it. I stand out because I’m a leader, but really... If you want a job, the west is the place to go,” Fick said, prompting Yugil to become thoughtful.

Seeing Yugil like that, Vitz slapped him on the shoulder. “You want to fight against that monster again? You sure are curious.”

“No, that’s not it. I’m just regretting a bit. If I don’t become stronger...” Yugil said.

“Then why don’t you try coming to my clan for a bit? I don’t mean to toot my own horn, but it’s pretty popu—” Fick said when a voice interjected.

“Oh? Are the famed swallows so lacking in number that they’re starting to hire people?” The voice said.

Vitz turned around.

What he saw almost made him curse the heavens, but somehow, he kept quiet and smiled.

The White Hand of Life was dressed in a white robe as usual. She took a seat beside Vitz.

“I see you’re eating well,” she said.

After emptying a mug full of ale passed to her, she shook her head. “This is really lukewarm.”

Mill nodded while Fick just gave her a fed-up look.

“Who cares? Rather than that, are you seriously going to keep your hood up while eating?” Wyatt asked with a sober face like that of a strict father.

The White Hand of Life laughed and took off her hood, revealing the face of a beautiful woman. With silver hair, emerald eyes, a sculpted nose, and a smile that never ceased, she was one to dazzle.

“It would be troublesome if people got to know my face, so I usually keep my hood down. Sorry,” she said.

“How exactly would that trouble you? I mean, personally, I’d like to get famous,” Fick asked, puzzled and beet red.

The White Hand of Life smiled. “It’s troubling when you’re a girl in a man’s world, right, Vitz?”

Vitz couldn’t help but turn away at those words full of meaning.

“Ah, yeah,” he said.

For some reason, Vitz seemed to be in despair.

This time the White Hand of Life turned to Yugil.

“I wonder if you’d be interested in a hunting job?” She asked.

“Huh? No. Umm...” Yugil said, completely disoriented.

She smiled. “It’s a bit too dangerous to go to the west right now, so the south is probably better.”

“The free cities are at war,” Fick said.

The White Hand of Life nodded and ate a slice of cheese. “I mean deeper down south, around the city of Galahad by the sea. There should be a lot of hunting jobs there.”

“Of course, there’s that,” Wyatt nodded.

Mill looked at him as if she wanted an explanation.

“The thing is... Going to the west right now is suicidal. Besides, that goblin is probably on a rampage and entering the forest is forbidden anyway. The jobs put out by the guild are at most by the forest’s perimeter. No one is entering the forest at all,” the White Hand of Life shrugged her shoulders, prompting Yugil to hang his head.

“You don’t want to die yet, right?” The sly expression that appeared on her beautiful face caused the two adventurers who had traveled with her to shiver.

“...Did you two boys forget your balls?” Mill asked, prompting the White Hand of Life to laugh loudly.

“Anyway, cheers! For meeting again after a long time,” the White Hand of Life said.

Everyone raised up their mugs—

“To our reunion! Cheers!”

—and knocked them together.

The adventurers were as lively as always.

Intermission: Fanfan’s Picture Diary

	Status
Name	Fanfan
Race	Mud Scale (Tarpidae)
Level	81
Class	Chieftain; Hardest Claws
Possessed Skills	Cave Dweller
Divine Protection	Moonlight Goddess
Attributes	Night

Several days after the Goblin King traveled to the west, I attended the Eight Flags Meeting. The tall shaman goblin, Gi Za Zakuend, was also attending.

The topic of the meeting was the planned cultural exchange with the goblins. Cooperation would be necessary in order to stand against the human threat. Of

course, no one held any delusions that the goblins and the demihumans would be able to work together well without any practice.

Everyone understood the situation. Yep, everyone.

Heading the meeting was the araneae, Nikea, while the secretary was me.

The secretary is great.

As for how great, she's so great that she's only second to the chairman of the meeting.

"No one has any disagreements on the cultural exchange then? If so, then the next topic will be picking out the people going," Nikea said.

Nikea was serious. Much more serious than me.

There wasn't anything interesting to do in the meeting, so it came as no surprise that that old man from the shell tribe, Luther, would be dozing off, his head completely pulled back into his shell.

But the minotaur was horrible. He actually had the gall to snore so loudly during the meeting. And those eyes! Why are his eyes open? Scary!

As for the fang tribe, they're... no good. Why? There's a lot of reasons, but for one, Mido is chewing on a bone. Disgusting.

No one is bothering to tell them off because everyone knows it's pointless. Despite their sloppy behavior though, they're unexpectedly reliable.

The new centaur chief is called Tianos. At first, he was angry, then he was shocked. In the end, he just broke down crying. Well, not really, but he looks about to anytime now. Meh, he'll get used to it. He's already better off than Daizos anyway. That one would have gone off on a rampage. He's the type that's always angry, after all.

The meeting continued as I drew on my picture diary.

Eventually, Nikea and the harpy, Yushika, got into an argument.

Yushika has been depressed lately, so she probably needs to release some of that pent-up stress. She argued with Nikea while she groomed her wings.

The representative of the long-tailed tribe had a weak presence as usual. It

would be great if he just disappeared like that. Those two heads of his makes it annoying to talk to him. You just can't tell which head you're supposed to talk to.

Oops, my bad. The picture recording for the meeting needs to be two lines side-by-side. That was close. If I don't do this seriously, Nikea will scold me.

As I was thinking that, the goblin, Lord Gi Za, stood up.



After whispering something by Nikea's ears, Gi Za left the meeting.

When I stole a glance at Nikea, I was shocked!

Is that a blush!?

Nikea!? I almost yelled her name out loud, but fortunately, I managed to catch myself in time.

Good job, Fanfan! What a big scoop! We need to draw this immediately!

But didn't Nikea have a good relationship with the Goblin King?

Yep. They did. They definitely did. Which means... Nikea is caught in the middle of a love triangle!!!

KOKOKO KOKEkKOKKOooOO!

No, calm down, Fanfan! The moonlight goddess, Vardina, is watching! Deep breath, take a deep breath... Whew. Forgive me, o goddess! Fanfan lost her cool for a moment.

But it's alright. It's still alright. Fanfan is calm now. Calm... Now, let's calmly analyze the situation.

Nikea gets along well with the Goblin King. Fanfan is calm. Yep, Fanfan is calm.

Lord Gi Za gets along with Nikea. Yep, calm. Calm as spring rain Fanfan is...

If we put one and two together?

We get a... lo-ve tri-an-gle.

KOKOKOKOKO KOBOLDddDdD!

Wait! That's not right! They're goblins!

This is a disaster! An amazing scoop!

Interracial, no, an interspecies relationship was enough to get me hot, but to think Nikea would actually be the subject of a love triangle!!!

KOKOKO KOKEkKOkKOooOO!

If only he were here, the king would surely embrace Nikea into his burly arms. But he's not! So the cool-eyed Lord Gi Za took advantage of the king's absence and approached Nikea!!

Being chief, Nikea could not refuse the king's advances! The king wasn't one to take advantage of someone's weakness, but their current situation alone was enough to seduce Nikea! What a schemer!

But then Lord Gi Za found out about their secret relationship, and the pangs of jealous bore into his heart.

He cried! *The king is mine!*

...

Huhhhhh!?

This, this is!

A f-f-f-forbidden territory! I can't. I mustn't. If I enter, I will surely never again see the light. Stop, Fanfan! You mustn't! Return to the light!

Before I knew it, Lord Gi Za was back in his seat.

From time to time, Nikea would send him a sharp glance...

This is definitely, undoubtedly... a threat!

Nikea is being threatened! Under that ever serious mask of hers, has Lord Gi Za actually managed to grasp her weakness?

To think he would accomplish such a fea-erm, sin, how envi-erm, how evil! Absolutely despicable! But why is my heart beating so quickly? Forgive me Nikea. Fanfan is a bad child. A bad child... But alas! I cannot stop!

Nikea's whole hearted devotion to his highness is in danger, but Lord Gi Za himself dreams of his highness day and night... Oh, Your Majesty, how sinful you are.



Suddenly, someone grabbed my shoulders, prompting me to turn around. When I did, what greeted me was Nikea's angry face, veins visibly bulging.

"What are you drawing, Lord Fanfan?" She asked.

Reality was a harsh thing. Just one moment, Nikea was a pitiful young maiden, but then in the next, she was a terrifying ogre whose arms ferociously grasped my shoulders.

"Erm... the meeting?" I said, unsure.

"This?" Nikea asked.

I sincerely nodded.

"Lord Fanfan, who asked you to draw? A secretary is supposed to write with words," Nikea said as she looked down on Fanfan's picture diary. "To think the important letter we would be sending to the elves would be this..."

It was a very embarrassing thing to have your work seen by others, but if it's Nikea, she might like it. It's a work I'm confident in, after all.

"In any case, Lord Fanfan, please prepare a clean sheet of paper. Do you understand?" Nikea said.

"Alright, what about this?" Fanfan asked.

This is my proud work, but if Nikea wants it, I'll give it. I'm reflecting on my actions, after all.

"I have no idea what you drew. Please take it home."

Shock.

After the meeting, I secretly cried by myself on my bed.

Even though I was so proud of it... Sniff.



Cave Dweller

Can freely dig through earth.

Chapter 122: Forest Metropolis

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	53
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

“...This is more than I expected,” I muttered in praise, earning Shunan’s smile.

The goblins following me were the same. It was as if they had found themselves in a giant’s nest, their unabashed curiosity reveling in their surroundings.

I knew that the elves built their home upon the forest, but seeing it for myself still left me speechless. Giant trees towered over the whole forest, creating a roof of evergreen leaves. These giant trees were at least 20 meters high, around which the elves built there houses, creating a village with a leafy roof above.

The trunk of the trees were so wide that 30 goblins holding hands wouldn’t be able to surround them. The green roof erected by the trees created a mild shade from sunlight that blocked its rays just enough to let the right amount of light through.

The trees grew more sparse and smaller the farther away from the village one went, but they were still quite big. Big enough that it would take 10 goblins

holding hands to surround them.

The sun here is pleasant. Looking closely, one would see medicinal plants and multicolored flowers blooming by the roots of the giant trees.

Elves with higher social status lived higher up the trees, but they didn't live that high up. It seems they generally preferred a lifestyle close to the ground. The quality of their daily necessities, however, were of much greater quality compared to the humans.

The elven furnitures were all skilfully crafted and easy to use. They were truly a sight to behold.

"My elder brother is caught up with something and won't be able to attend to us for awhile, so let me show you show around in the meantime," Shunan said.

Leaving the goblins just outside the village to make camp, I took Selena and Shumea with me to go on Shunan's tour.

"Wow, this is amazing," Shumea remarked with wide-open eyes.

Selena was all smiles as she explained various things. Who would've thought that that girl who was always hiding behind Shumea would be so proactive once we entered the village? Secretly, my mood turned for the better.

We've just started and this visit is showing good results already.

"I heard there are koro dwarves in the elf villages," I said carefully, but to my surprise, Shunan nodded without the slightest hint of wariness.

"There are," he said. "Shall I introduce you? The ones living in the villages nearby are the most famous."

"Please. I want to ask them to forge a great sword for me."

Nodding, Shunan led me to a cave underground. When I listened closely, I could hear the sounds of metal being hit.

Dwarves who looked just like the white-skinned Gordob goblins and light-brown rugged versions of them went in and out of the cave ceaselessly. They were even smaller than the normal goblins, reaching up only their chest. They were probably not even 4ft. tall.

“We’ll try talking to the smith, but... You should know, he’s a moody one. If he says no, it’s no. You’ll just have to give up then,” Shunan said.

The elves probably don’t get refused much, but as I’m a goblin, the odds might be worse for me.

After a while a light-brown-skinned dwarf with a grown beard walked out. His exposed arms were huge and burly and his body was built like a rock. On his shoulder was a giant hammer bigger than himself.

“You the bastard who asked for me?” He asked.

I took out the broken fragments of Iron Second and presented it to the koro dwarf. “I am someone from the east. I would be much obliged if you could fix this broken great sword.”

The koro dwarf stared at me a good while before he turned his gaze to the great sword.

“This is...” Staring at my great sword while fondling his majestic beard, his face went ghastly. After a while he took a fragment.

“I hear you are the most skilled around here. Please fix it,” I said, sincerely bowing my head.

“Since when did goblins learn to speak like you do? Weird guy. Fine, I’ll stake the name Dumbre Dadee David and fix it. But what will you give me?”

A price, hmm... What to do.

“Smith, this is elder brother’s guest, so...” Shunan tried to argue.

But the koro dwarf shut him down. “Shut it, kid!”

The koro dwarf looked up at me.

“If you can fix it well, I will promise to swing my sword once for you,” I said.

“A bloody oath fitting for a great sword, eh? I think I like you. It’ll take a while for the sword to finish. You staying in this village for a while?”

“I intend to.”

“Come back in 10 days then.”

After gathering all the fragments Dumbre Dadee David left.

“My apologies if he’s worsened your mood. He’s really stubborn, that one, so...” Shunan said.

“Don’t worry, I’ve taken no offense. He’s good, right? I’m looking forward to it,” I said.

Shunan thought I’d get mad, so when he saw me unaffected, he was quite surprised. After staring at me for a good second or two, he continued his tour.

Unexpectedly, I received a fairly welcome reception in the places he brought me to.

“Weren’t goblins looked down on by the elves?” I asked.

Shunan laughed. “My elder brother has instructed everyone that he intends to form an alliance with you, so they’re all behaving accordingly.”

This brother of his seems quite influential.

He might be the person I’ve been waiting for, a leader who can rule over others. My heart raced at the thought. Like that I returned to the goblins.



The next day I finally met Shunan’s elder brother. He was a dignified man with the graceful face you’d expect of the elves. He had long blond hair, almond eyes, a sculpted nose, and a straight mouth that showed his strong resolve.

Toufen

Arata

“Friend from the east, welcome. It is an honor to meet the Goblin King,” Shure said.

There was a strange rhyme about his words, probably brought about because of his identity as someone who inherited the words of the spirits.

“You call me friend, but I don’t believe we’ve been acquainted,” I said.

“Like-minded people are friends, no?” he said as if it were perfectly natural.

There were no hints of him forcing himself nor where there any hints of him trying to deceive me. He was as honest as clear water.

Recovering my calm, I lowered my voice and spoke with a sharp gaze, “So you

know me, but I do not know you.”

Grabanashtur

Fioren

Naga

“Faster than the wind, the bird speaks your tale.. Let us not be anxious. There are many things yet to know,” Shure said as he led me to his house.

“I prepared these things in haste, so they might not be much, but it would bring me much joy if you could accept them as a show of good faith,” Shure said as he showed me a pile of armor pieces, from breastplates to helmets. There were so many they couldn’t be counted.

“You really intend to give all these to us?”

“

Grabanashtur

Fioren

Naga

False words sink into the abyss; true words reflect upon the surface of the water.

. These are all made of steel. I’m sure they’ll prove invaluable for the goblins.”

His face was as still as the surface of a tranquil lake, not a ripple could be seen over it.

“Thank you, but there is something I would like to ask first.”

“Ask ahead.”

“What are you going to use when the fighting begins?”

Suddenly, it was as if the air had frozen over.

“My oh my, you sure are sharp. Normally, just this would be enough to win one over,” Shure said, narrowing his eyes.

I smiled. “It seems what was passed down among your kind was the method of creating special armors.”

The elves should have a way of creating blue steel (Srilana), a metal stronger than steel and yet softer than glass and treasure steel (Orichalcum), a kind of metal that conducts mana better than iron. Selena did mention these things, but I kept quiet about it, and now, I see that it is indeed true.

Just a while ago, this elf before me was as soft as spring breeze, and yet now, he stands before me like the cold wind of the north.

“Hmph. I suppose you’re not just brawns then,” he said.

The change he went through was so excessive I did a double take for a moment before collecting myself. It seems this is his real personality.

“Please, have a seat,” he said, offering me a chair.

The seat he offered was by no means cheap, as it managed to fit me snugly without making me feel confined. I would like one of these. In between us was a short table. We sat opposite each other.

“Let me introduce myself again. I am Shure Forni. The lord of the Rustling Forest, Forni, and a member of the Sage’s Council.”

A proud man, though I suppose that’s to be expected from an elven sage. Regardless, since he tried to buy me out first, he must at least be better off than that idiot (Cecil).

“I am the Goblin King from the east.”

“A pleasure to meet you... If I may get straight to the point, the words I said before were not a lie.”

I thought back on his words a while ago.

Silence filled the room, and the first to break it was Shure.

“We do wish to ally ourselves with those of like mind.”

“Against the humans, you mean.”

“Yes.”

The pair of emerald eyes he looked at me with were as still as shallow waters, but they seemed to run deep as they sought to measure my worth.

Hmm... It might be better if I speak frankly here.

“We fought the humans some time ago. They were 400 men strong, and while we suffered considerable losses, we did manage to repel them.”

“Oh?”

“My goal is to create a country that will not lose out to humans.”

“A goblin kingdom?”

For a moment, he cast his eyes down, then he looked back up at me. I don’t

know what sort of calculations ran through his head just now, but he wordlessly implored me to continue.

“Defeating the humans will prove challenging, but it’s not impossible. The issue comes after. Ruling them is currently beyond the power of the goblins. Of course, there are ways to go about it, but...”

We could take our time or choose our methods, but it should eventually be possible. The problem is it will take too long.

“Hmm...” Nodding once, Shure fell into a deep thought again. After a while, he spoke. “So aside from weapons and armor, you also want people after you defeat the humans?”

Seeing me nod, Shure crossed his arms. “Do you know what we want?”

I replied. “We will swear an oath not to invade the forest. The territory east of the demihumans will be ours, but we will not invade the lands to the west.”

Shure became thoughtful again, then he asked. “I beg your pardon, but are you aware of the geography of the world?”

“...Aside from the forest in the east, no.”

It would be pointless to lie. I don’t know what this man is thinking, but I’ll just have to hear him out.

“Of course, the goblins have been thriving in the east these past few years. Excuse me...”

Shure walked away to a corner of the room, then came back with a scroll on him. He laid the scroll over the table.

“This is...” I muttered.

“The world,” he answered.

This was the first time I saw the map of the world.

“We are in this region.” Shure pointed to a region on the map.

To the north were the numerous mountain ranges. In the center were forests. To the right were plains and patches of forests. To the south was a desert, but beyond it were the seas. Deep into the sea was an archipelago. Then finally, to

the west were the plains and a far-off continent.

The forest being the center was of course simply because the elves made the map and not because it actually was so. Until now, it's only been a vague target, but with this map before me, I finally have a clear image of that which I must conquer.

"What is the situation in the northern mountain ranges? Are there humans living in the desert? And that continent to the west, what sort of place is it?" I asked without intending to. As a result Shure's brows rose.

"You know the cardinal points? I see... So you are indeed not a common goblin. I would very much like to know from where you unearthed that knowledge, but fine... I'll fill you in first," he said.

"...Please," I said.

This man is sharp. If I'm not careful, I might spill more than I need to.

"The northern mountain ranges, also known as the mountains of the snow god, Yggdrasil. There are humans living there alongside the snow, but they rarely enter the forest. They're not hostile, but they're not allies either."

Shure pointed to the southern desert. "The southern desert, the great desert of the desert god, Ashunasan. There are indeed some humans living here, but they do not trespass onto our lands. The problem is the west."

Though less so compared to the east, the west also had plains, and then some water, beyond which was a continent. "This area is dominated by humans. It's still better off compared to east, but the people here do kidnap our people from time to time."

In other words, the enemy is largely situated to the east. There are some tough nations down to the south, but because of the dangerous monsters lurking there, there's not a lot of room to maneuver. The west on the other hand, having little influence, seems to be a relatively easier target.

"Unfortunately, the west also has people migrating to it from the continent beyond the sea," Shure said with perfect timing, almost as if he had read my thoughts, causing me to raise my brows.

“Anything on mind?” He asked.

“Do you elves only live here in this forest?” I asked.

“You noticed, I see. Do you see the patches of forests? We live there too. As for the rest of the sylphs, I have no idea where they are.

And it’s not in writing, but the salamanders, the fire elves, live in a corner of a volcanic region to the west. I heard the undines, the water elves, have always been living in a city of water to the east, but... we haven’t gotten any word from them in over 100 years. The gnomes, the earth elves, are situated in the northern mountains. In any case, communication would require that we encroach into man’s domain, so it’s not very convenient.”

So communication between the various elves was nearly impossible.

“We’ll have to focus our forces and create a breakwater then. Look here.” I pointed toward the eastern region of the humans. “I don’t know what it’s called, but there’s a human kingdom here. We need to set up a defense outside the forest here to protect the forest.”

“A breakwater to keep them from going further,” Shure said.

“Exactly, that’s where I’ll be building my kingdom. A kingdom extending from the forest to the plains.”

Our kingdom will extend from the Fortress of the Abyss into the domain of man. We will be utilizing the resources of the forest to expel the wave of humans coming from the east and the south.

“The problem is the north then,” Shure said.

I nodded.

After stealing a region from the humans, if we could just make one of the regions our ally, we would be able to greatly lessen the burden of defending. The north is not hostile to the elves, so we definitely need to acquire their support.

“I need information on the humans,” I said.

Actually, I could get some information from Shumea, but I wanted to get Shure’s information. Later, I’ll be able to see the veracity of elven intel.

“I’ll gather what I can. It’s already a bit late though, so—” Shure was saying when suddenly, some loud footsteps resounded from deep inside the house alongside a high-pitched voice.

What’s going on?”

“—! Dad!”

The door came swinging with great momentum, and then in the next moment, a little elven girl appeared.

“Dad I heard there’s a goblin here! Is it true!? Woah! It’s the real thing! It’s so big and black!”

I frowned at the noise.

What’s going on? I wordlessly asked Shure, but when I turned to him, this ever composed man was actually facing up the heavens with his palm covering his face.

“...Shunaria, we’re having a meeting right now, so if you’re going to play...” Shure said.

“Dad! I want to hear stories about goblins!”

“Shunaria!”

“I want to hear! I want to hear, so tell me a story!”

It seems even this seemingly perfect man has his own weakness.

Shure, don’t look at me with that face. I’m not babysitting.

“Goblin King, lets end here for the day,” Shure said.

“Alright. The embrace of the night god is almost upon us, after all,” I said.

The way the girl looked at me reminded me of the way cats looked toward their prey.

What? The moment I thought that, she turned to Shure.

“I’m absolutely not giving up!” She declared then left.

“Sorry about that,” Shure said, sighing.

I chuckled. “Don’t mind, don’t mind. I don’t have any kids myself, but it seems

fun.”

“It’s been really hectic lately. The elves need to be united, and there’s so much to do, so I haven’t been able to discipline her. Ah, forget it. I’m grumbling.”

Feeling a strange sense of intimacy, I left Shure’s house.

I need to instruct the goblins, so that shrew of a girl doesn’t get hurt when she plays with them.

But still... Those eyes.

If those eyes were aiming for me... that’s pretty amazing. There was a distance between me and Shure before she came, but when she did that distance suddenly got smaller.

Hmm... Interesting, I think I’ll try talking to her once.

As the hour of the night god gradually descended, I returned to the goblins waiting outside the village.

—325 days until the war with the humans.

Chapter 123: Whispers of the One-Eyed Snake

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	53
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

The world was still in the embrace of the night god, but the lingering image of a loving father was the only thing in my mind.

Embraced by the warmth of the night, I walked through the dark forest. The forest outside the elven territory was dangerous. If we let our guard down, we could end up prey to some wandering beast. But for some reason, despite knowing that, there was this odd warmth that sought to wrap itself around me.

“How strange,” I muttered.

The shaman, Gi Za Zakuend, might be able to uncover the cause of this strange atmosphere, but as for me, the most I can do is to keep it in mind.

It’s not a bad feeling though, and I’ve actually already gotten used to it by now. I walked through the forest of the night while filled with that strange sense of warmth.

“Blood and war is your path, little one. Neither fear it nor turn away from it.”

It's been a while since Verid last spoke.

"Worried that I'll stop fighting?" I asked.

"The old gods of the water and the forest live eternally. Their influence upon these lands is great, weakening the burn of the flame. It is uncomfortable."

The snake spoke honestly. The other snake, the one whose mark was a gem on my left hand, seemed to agree with Verid as its mark quietly rumbled.

"I have already begun my path to domination. It is a bit too late to be turning away now."

I have long been sick of this thirst for conquest within me. I want to win. I want to fight!

Those feelings blazed like a great flame within me as I spoke to Verid.

"I will take back that which was taken from me. Until then I will crush everything in my path."

"Little brother, don't forget. The Goddess of the Underworld is both our mother and master."

The calm feeling within me changed, and the smile of a beast appeared on my face.

"It doesn't matter who it is. If someone stands in my path, I will cut them down. I won't care even if they're gods."

Good... Good! That is how you should be. Don't forget, little one. The words I, the guiding black flames, have given you. Don't ever forget."

Verid's laughter resounded loudly along with the squirming of the snake symbol on my arm, then his voice vanished.

Remembering the words I said just moments ago, I muttered to myself. "I will take you back. No matter the cost..."

Those words vanished in the dim light of the night.



Altesia sweetly smiled as she watched the goblin reflected on the giant magic

mirror.

“He conquered the demihumans, and now, his claws reach for the elves. Unexpected... Truly, unexpected,” Altesia said to the one-eyed snake, Verid.

“The barrier of the forest and water gods have indeed been strengthened. It would be difficult for anyone to enter without the invitation of the elves,” Verid said.

The Goblin King’s decision to send an elven envoy was correct. The elven forest had a barrier around it that led intruders astray. There was no other way through it outside of burning the whole forest down.

The fact that the Goblin King was able to get past that without even knowing of its existence was truly nothing more than his good luck.

“Are ^{Iren} the water god and ^{Chenzhen} the forest god interfering on the elves’ behalf?” Altesia asked.

“They seem to be keeping a low profile... But they’re not dead,” Verid said.

“Hmm... The apostle of that which is faster than the wind was refused contact with the forest god. Are they trying to gather their strength? If so why?” Altesia wondered as she smiled that ever alluring smile of hers.

Verid answered. “Perhaps it is because they’re lacking faith? The forest god experienced much anguish at the humans’ attack on the forest, and the water god’s body is being polluted. Wouldn’t all these be enough to weaken their strength?”

“Verid, it is forbidden to make light of the gods.”

“As you command.”

It was precisely because they gave in to their emotions and fought in the last war that they were driven into the abyss in the end.

“But if your deduction is correct, I might be able to pull something.”

“Shall I attempt contact with the spirits?”

The gods might be called gods, but they were not capable of accomplishing much by themselves, so they distributed their power and created spirits, who

served as the gods' representatives and carried out various functions regarding the maintenance of the world. For example, they took care of the land, created barriers, maintained the climate... and so on.

Once, the elves were proficient at hearing the words of the spirits, and they worked with other races to comprehend the language of the spirits. After the war of the gods, the ability was lost, but it was not fully extinguished, as fragments of this skill remain scattered throughout the world. Some came to be known as cursed swords or evil swords, some as great treasures, some as secrets of the royal treasury, some were hidden among the sages of the old forest, and some were passed down as knowledge by the giants, generation after generation.

"Yes, I'll leave it to you," Altesia said to the bowing snake.

Altesia laughed. "I never thought the goblins would make me this happy. Maybe I'll give them some of my strength."

The more she liked them, the more freely she would give out her power. Though her love ran deep, her jealousy burned just as bright; the goddess of the underworld narrowed her eyes.

Gawain

Perseval

"...The Wingless Sky Snake and Earth-Devouring Serpent should be making a move soon."

The household of the goddess of the underworld that once antagonized the whole world. Right now, its members were lurking in the shadows, waiting for the day they would once again let loose the dogs of war.

"If the goblins wish for it, I don't mind becoming their mother," Altesia said.

When the mother god, Deetna, fell into the abyss, the monsters were born. To this day the abyss was full of monsters born from the mother god.

The mother god was the master of the abyss and the mother of the fallen; uncountable hordes of monsters followed her.

Altesia, her successor, inherited all those. Monsters, beasts, snakes... This being the case, she did not mind if she became the master of these monsters, even those who were abandoned above the land.

“...If master wishes for it, I will use my strength,” Verid said as the golden gleam from his master’s eyes shot at him. “However, it could be said that the motherless monsters and the current goblin king are what they are because they have no gods.”

Altesia turned her powerful gaze back to the magic mirror.

“True. Just having them nearby isn’t love, is it?” Altesia folded her hands and bewitchingly smiled.

“We shall begin our preparations,” Verid said, withdrawing from Altesia’s presence at her nod.

“With that much ability, I don’t mind letting you lead the monsters above the ground, but... You might want to hurry, boy.”

The image reflected on the mirror changed. This time what was reflected on it was not the image of a goblin but of humans.



“Make the moats 2 to 5 meters deep! Make sure those anti-cavalry fences are properly buried!”

The powerful voice of human commanders could be heard resounding here and there. The humans were currently building a colonial city on the boundary of the forest, between the goblins’ home and the human region.

After making camp and surrounding it with anti-cavalry fences, the humans planned out where the moats would go. When they did, they quickly planned out the rest of the colonial city.

Of course, the humans knew that the monsters could attack while they were building the colonial city, so the feudal lord of the west, Gowen, had his men and some adventurers patrol. While they stayed alert, the craftsmen working on the city worked day in and day out. The resources and the food were sent everyday from the western capital, Jirata, in which the western feudal lord himself lived.

The first thing they created were the stone walls, which blocked the vision of their would-be intruders and demarcated the land.

The technique they used to fill the gaps of the bricks with cement was something unimaginable to the goblins. That being said, while it was called a 'wall', it was really more like rocks piled atop each other without any order.

The assassin, Gi Ji Arsil, who went out to scout watched on from the dark of the night.

"What is that?" Gi Ji Arsil muttered.

No matter how much he stretched out his hands, the seemingly endless walls were at least 2 times his height. Moreover, in front of them were dry moats wide enough that the goblins wouldn't be able to jump across them. From time to time, the humans would line up wooden shields atop the walls while people passed.

"Lord Gi Ga was right."

Those walls could probably stand even a full-body tackle from the orcs. Gi Ji Arsil did not know what those walls were, but he knew they were something to be wary of.

The Fortress of the Abyss was by no means tall. Instead, it went deeper down beneath the ground. To the goblins who did not fear the dark, this was most preferable, but to the humans, creating their fortresses above the land, reaching up as high as they could was most preferable.

Gi Ji Arsil did not understand this difference in perspective, so when he saw the giant fortress, he could only imagine how much bigger it was under the ground, rousing his sense of danger to the limits.

"They said not to use this except for emergencies, but..."

In Gi Ji's hand was the corpse of an unlucky bird, which he received from the Gordob's priestess, Kuzan. This was a priceless treasure that allowed one to send word to the Fortress of the Abyss. It was something the Gordobs went through great lengths to create.

"I believe now is that time."

After speaking some words to the unlucky bird, he hit the corpse on its head, then in the next instant, the supposedly dead bird suddenly came to life,

spreading its wings and flying in the sky.

“The king instructed us not to leave the forest, but the situation calls for it.”

The humans were brazenly building a fortress right in front of their eyes. This was clearly a provocation. Could they really just let this fortress be built?

“No... For the sake of the king, this thing must not be built.”

Gi Ji waited for the night god’s embrace to cover the world before exiting the forest, then picking out the time when the watch fires were being lit, he weaved through the darkness and approached the fortress.



“How was the meeting?” A voice asked.

Fenit Symphoria used the elven road on his way back home. When he arrived, a voice called out to him. It was his female cousin; the one who left the forest before.

“Hmph, it was a waste of time. To think Goblins would... It was truly a fool’s babble,” Fenit sneered.

The Tranquil Forest (Symphoria) was one of the more notably bigger forests to the south of the elven region, which was a great desert filled with yellow sand and rocks.

“About Selena...” Pale said.

“Ah, sorry, senior sister. I forgot,” Fenit replied.

“What do you mean you for—”

“I’m a busy man.”

Fenit seemed happy to see Pale biting her lips.

It was then that the elves who worked at his house came out to greet him.

“Is the food ready?” Fenit asked.

“Yes, Master Fenit. Everything has been prepared,” a servant elf said.

Seeing the servant elves excessively flatter him brought much joy to Fenit. With a satisfied smile, Fenit left Pale behind.

“Oh, if I feel like it, I might look up that girl, Selena. I’ll have to go to the Rustling Forest (Forni) again anyway,” Fenit said.

“Really?” Pale said, expectant.

“Of course. In fact, why don’t I look her up while having my meal?”

Pale nodded while biting her lips.

She did not have any power left in this village. She had lost all of her connection during the time she spent outside as an adventurer. No matter how mortifying or sad her situation became, she would have no choice but to obey the sage, Fenit.

—324 days until the war with the humans.



The Goblin King’s skills have changed.

The skill, Instinct, has evolved to Warrior’s Instinct.

Warrior’s Instinct

Dodge fatal attacks. Takes effect against enemies up to one class higher than one’s own.

When leading a horde, you will know when your enemy is about to crush your horde.

New skill learned.

Guided One

Your fortune will turn for the better as you fulfill the wishes of your patron gods (source of divine protection).

The divine protection you have will grow stronger and your ether will grow greater the more you oppose the will of the gods your patron gods are antagonistic to.



Chapter 124: Elf Princess

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	53
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake



Weaving through the dark of the night to approach the forest, Gi Ji Arsil saw the giant fields being cultivated on the other side of the walls. Gi Ji’s eyes opened wide. These were the same fields that Mattis once plowed at the Gi Village, but they were much bigger. Gi Ji did not fully grasp the importance of these giant fields, but he knew that their being here was not a good thing. On top of that, there were no trees past the walls. The land was being changed to fit the humans.

It had only been a meager 40 days since the king swore an oath with the humans not to fight, yet the humans had already changed the land to this extent. The ability of the humans to accomplish so much in so little greatly shook Gi Ji.

“As expected...”

The humans had no intentions of keeping their promise with the king; they

would not wait until the promised time.

Gi Ji believed the humans needed to be weakened before they could set up a foothold here, but was this really the right choice? Gi Ji wasn't sure. While Gi Ji was caught up in his thoughts, he heard the footsteps of a human clad in armor.

Gi Ji took out his dagger and stifled his presence.

"...Who goes there?" The soldier asked to Gi Ji, who was currently concealing himself.

Gi Ji did not have the time for doubts. If he just ran away like this, there wouldn't be any point to him sneaking here in the first place.

He had to at least cross swords with the enemy.

Thinking that, Gi Ji decided to cut down a soldier first before running away.

As Gi Ji jumped out quietly, the soldier took out his sword. Sparks flashed as their weapons clashed.

"Identify yourself!" The man asked again.

Gi Ji's surprise attack had failed. Cold sweat slid down his back.

"Enemy attack!" The soldier cried.

Sensing the human soldiers gathering, Gi Ji concluded that there was no point to further fighting.

It was unfortunate, but he had to retreat. Scouting out the enemy was one thing, but if he were to fall to the humans here, then he would truly be throwing mud on the king's orders. Gi Ji made a run for it.

He weaved through the darkness, dodging the arrows that came his way, then he jumped for the stone wall. His hands raised him up, and within a single breath, he managed to get past the walls. But before he could get down, an arrow managed to find its way into his back.

Pain jolted through his body, but he didn't have the time to writhe. He dragged his body back to the forest.



The night was still dark when I decided to make my way back to the goblin

camp. Along the way I felt someone watching me. When I turned around, there was no one, only the presence of a person under the countless shadows of the trees.

An assassin?

No, the killing intent is too weak. I wanted to move my body anyway, so I decided to run toward that presence.

“Who are you?”

Unsheathing the long sword by my waist, I gradually closed in on that presence. But then arrows came shooting at me from the gaps between the trees.

“Tch!?”

Shifting my body to the side to dodge the arrows, I ran toward the direction the arrows came from. I swung my sword to cut away the branches blocking my path. When the path was cleared, several more arrows came shooting at me. My eyes worked well even in the dark, but it was still a challenge to dodge arrows coming from the shadows of the leaves. The most I could do was knock down those arrows with my sword.

After knocking the arrows down, I felt the presence move toward the part of the forest where there were giant trees. I didn’t have a way to attack from a distance, so I had to near the presence first before I could win. I knew I was at a disadvantage, but I still pursued.

“—!”

There were countless trees between me and that presence. There was no guarantee the arrows would even hit me, but—

Sparks flashed as my sword knocked down another arrow. I couldn’t see the face of this mysterious person, but I’m starting to have an idea who this is. When the person ahead turned around for a moment, two arrows were nocked at the same thing. That was an elven technique.

“—Winds!”

When I heard a spell chanted, a strong wind came blowing from up ahead.

When I looked up a small figure was flying.

Planning on running!?

Accel

“My body is like a cloud of dust!”

I blew up ether behind me as soon as I saw my mysterious assailant flying.

Reach him!

I was about to swing my sword, but when I saw the frightened face of my mysterious assailant, I stretched out my arms instead and boxed the ears of the small elf, then I looked toward our would-be landing spot, which was a giant tree.

“Nu!?”

That’s not good! For a moment, the future of us crashing into the giant tree flashed through my mind.

Wind

Break

“Winds protect me!” The little elf chanted, causing a wind to blow us away from the tree, safely down to the ground.

“Well then, what excuse do you have, little girl?” I said.

“How about thanking me first,” she said.

I thought it was a familiar face, but as it turns out, it’s Shure’s daughter. If I recall correctly, her name is—

I asked the little elf with my sword pointed at her. Unlike when I first met her, her gaze was as calm as a tranquil lake. Is this the real her?

“While you did save me just now, didn’t you also attack me a while ago?” I said.

“But I wasn’t aiming for your life!” The girl inflated her cheeks and pouted. “I just wanted to see how strong you were—”

She went quiet as I moved my blade across her skin.

“You know a joke like that wouldn’t fly, right?” I said.

If I put just a little bit more power into my sword, blood would begin to drip from her skin. Wanting to know someone’s strength is something only an

equally strong person has the right to say. A girl who doesn't know her place doesn't have the right to say those words.

Such conceit wouldn't do for us goblins or even the elves.

I should kill her while no one is watching.

"You're serious, huh," she said.

The girl seems to have noticed my resolve as she looked me in the eye.

"We don't have the luxury not to be, after all. The humans are approaching and my dream is still far off. It would be absurd to think I have the time to play around." A brutal smile appeared on my lips as I said that. No, that wasn't a brutal smile but one of self-derision.

I didn't have the time to play, and yet I actually hesitated to kill this girl. No matter how beautiful, enemies must be put to death.

I have an intrinsic fear toward beautiful things. Or perhaps it's only a lingering effect of the fear I felt from Altesia's beauty.

A beauty so great that it felt like I would lose myself. This girl is still lacking compared to her, but she is plenty beautiful.

"...In that case, I apologize, Goblin King."

"That's not enough. Aside from your apology, I need to be recompensed as well."

The girl sighed. "I've heard of your kind before, but... You really are greedy."

"We do not have anything; therefore, we are greedy."

The girl became thoughtful for a moment, then she spoke. "Then how about I give you myself?"

"...Excuse me?"

The girl knitted her brows as she looked me straight in the eye. Those eyes were not lying.

"Rather rude, aren't we? I've thought it through, you know. My father will be forming an alliance with you soon, correct?" The girl said.

I nodded.

“Then in that case, you’re going to need something better as proof of trust. Something better than mere words: action. If you take me as your bride, the elves will surely never betray you, and the goblins will prosper.”

A marriage to form an alliance. In human words this is what you would call a ‘political marriage’. This is one way to go about things, indeed. In fact, it was used many times in the past, a testament to its efficacy.

The only problem is whether this girl is saying this on her own accord.

“Did Shure tell you to say that? In order to make us easier to control?” I said provokingly.

He seemed like a doting father, but that might have been an act.

“The sylphs of the Rustling Forest (Forni) have not fallen so!” The girl said those words quietly but there was a strong will behind them.

She’s serious then?

“I may only be a little girl, someone who can’t even attend the sage’s council and ignorant of matters pertaining to other countries, but I won’t lose to anyone when it comes to my love for my home.”

Her glare remained on me, unmoving. No, it’s moving a little, but she’s doing her best to hide that. She’s not too bad, I suppose.

“Hmm... I’ll accept your apology, but I can’t take you as wife,” I wryly smiled as I thought of Reshia’s unhappy face.

“What a haughty goblin! Don’t you know goblins normally wouldn’t have a chance to marry an elf!?”

True, elves certainly wouldn’t ever consider a goblin as spouse material.

“Right. Anyway, don’t pull this sort of prank again. Warn the other kids too if you can.”

I sheathed my sword, but the girl seemed to have no intentions of leaving as she just sat there on the ground.

“What’s wrong? Aren’t you going to go home?”

“I can’t stand up,” the girl said, her face red with embarrassment though she tried to hide it.

Seeing her like that gives one a feeling of superiority, but it didn’t change the fact that I now had to do something troublesome. Sighing, I picked the girl up.

“...This is humiliating,” she complained as she stifled her cries.

“There’s nothing unsightly in standing tall despite your fears. Although the reasons for your predicament aren’t praiseworthy, you being able to negotiate with me is. Being able to survive an encounter against someone strong is to be praised.”

“To think a goblin would console me...”

Well, she is being carried; a little embarrassment can’t be helped.

“But... thank you,” she said.

“It’s something laudable. Be proud of it.”

Shunaria honestly nodded.



“I take it everything is ready?”

Several people were gathered in a dark room.

“Yes. We’ve made contact.”

“Then...”

When those words briefly ended, the figures vanished in the shadows.

A few days later, the alliance of the Rustling Forest (Forni) and the Windy Forest (Gastair) with the goblins was announced throughout the whole sylph forest.

The elven citizens who had no idea what was going on were greatly rattled.

“Have they lost their minds? The wise and honorable Forni actually formed an alliance with the likes of goblins!?”

“A goblin of all things? Demihumans I’d still understand to some extent, but goblins!? Has Falun Gastair gone senile!?”

Chaos and confusion spread among the elves.

“Impossible! What is Shure and Falun thinking!” Fenit Symphoria’s fertile body shook waves as he slammed his fist on the desk. His elven retainers could only look down on the ground as they waited for their master’s wrath to pass.

“Say something! What is going on!?”

No one could raise their head to answer their angry master’s question.

“Useless! Call the Sages’ Council. On my name, Fenit Symphoria, I will not permit this alliance with the goblins! We are the proud and noble elves, for crying out loud!”

“I-I’ll send a messenger at once then,” an elven retainer said with shaking voice before rushing out the door.

After the retainer elf left, this time Pale entered.

“Fenit! What’s going on? Forni has formed an alliance with the goblins?” She asked.

“It’s as you’ve heard. That bastard, Shure Forni, has lost his mind! As the still sane ones, we must have him executed!”

“Can you win?”

Even Pale has heard of Shure Forni’s greatness.

“Can I win? Is that something you need to ask!? Ha! Enough fool’s talk, please. Is there any reason to lose? There is no reason this Fenit Symphoria could possibly lose to some mad elf who formed an alliance with the likes of goblins, is there?”

Pale didn’t think so, however. A battle between elves was still a battle.

The elves did not have much experience with large-scale battles. If the war were to be fought solely of neophytes, the result would be up to luck, but Shure has allied himself with the goblins.

Back when Pale was still living with the humans, she heard of how the holy knight, Gene, met his untimely demise in the Forest of Darkness, the area east of where they sylphs lived. Somehow, Pale didn’t think things would go so

smoothly.

“Alright.” Pale bit her lips and left the raging Fenit to himself. Right now she would have to fight for Fenit.

“I’ll have to do what I can,” she muttered.

She would have to visit her old friends and reach out to some decent elves.

“Selena... Please be safe.”

Shaking off the foreboding feelings haunting her, her beautiful face gradually turned into that of a warrior.

—320 days until the battle with the humans.

Intermission: Gi Gi’s Beast Horde

Status	
Name	Gi Gi Orudo
Race	Goblin
Level	14
Class	Noble
Possessed Skills	Track; Throw Projectile; Axe Mastery C-; Sloppy Eater; Jeer; Tacit Understanding; Ancient Beast Tamer; Beast Trainer; Cooperation; Friend of the Horde; Bug Eater
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None
Subordinate Beasts	Triple Head

Since the king sent Gi Gi Orudo away, he has been going wherever he pleased, taking along any beast he found along his way. Gi Gi did not catch the beasts he found, however, and instead used the skill, Tacit Understanding, to make the beasts friendly and follow him on their own accord. Like this Gi Gi eventually managed to have a horde of beasts following behind him.

Thorn Dog, a large-sized beast with thorn-like fur. Big Eye, a bird with multicolored feathers arranged in the shape of an eye. Mirage, a monkey that

could fade into its surroundings. Thorn Fox, foxes whose fur would stand up like thorns when threatened. Dragon Turtle, a kind of turtle that could eventually become over 5 meters big, though currently, it was only 1 meter big.

Gi Gi took his horde of beast and headed toward a swamp.

Snow fell heavily on the distant mountains of the snow god. Gradually, the snow built up from the crossroads toward the foot of the mountains.

Damp clouds from the south crashed into the giant mountains of the snow god, showering rain over the foot of the mountains. Water permeated the ground, reaching deep under ground, as a great stream passed above ground, down toward the Forest of Darkness.

The bountiful rain and the warm climate has – for many millenia – shaped the great forests, causing much change to the beasts living in them.

After receiving the king's orders, Gi Gi headed straight up to the north, where the humidity was high and the marshlands, which the beasts loved, were many.

When Gi Gi thought of all the beasts waiting for him, excitement filled him.

He shivered every time he thought back to the king's words.

"We must become stronger. Henceforth, go to the north and increase your horde."

Gi Gi thought back to the king's words as he looked around his surroundings.

"The king is truly great. He even allowed me to do as I please," Gi Gi muttered.

Gi Gi interpreted the king's command to increase his horde as taming more beasts. What a generous king indeed to allow his subordinate to happily tame more beasts.

Of course, the king actually intended for him to gather goblin subordinates, but Gi Gi completely missed that part.

Gi Gi looked around him as he happily hummed.

Meanwhile, the triple head he was riding on was whispering to itself.

What do you think? The leftmost head asked.

I think he's got this whole thing wrong. The middle head said.

Isn't there anything to eat? The rightmost head said as it searched its surroundings.

In the end, since they wouldn't be disadvantaged in any way, the leftmost head and middle head stopped bothering about Gi Gi's misunderstanding, and they searched the surroundings for some food just like the rightmost head.

"Is that..." Gi Gi muttered, causing all eyes to gather.

The area up ahead was a swamp. The grasses were moist and on the rotting woods were moss growing. Vines hung from the branches up above that blocked the light of the sun, wrapping themselves around trees, obstructing one's vision. It was in such a place that Gi Gi saw something mysterious, causing him to open his eyes wide in shock.

As the wind blew, a jellyfish floated aimlessly above the swamp.

Gi Gi carefully observed the jellyfish, while the beasts behind him gulped.

Half the jellyfish's body was transparent as it floated over the center of the swamp.

After a while the jelly fish floated elsewhere, whereupon the grass underneath it quickly grew.

"Shall we go after it?" Gi Gi asked.

But the three heads shook their heads. Even the rightmost head, who was always eager to eat, refused. The beasts knew how dangerous getting stuck in a swamp was.

For some reason though, the jellyfish suddenly floated next to Gi Gi.

If Gi Gi just stretched out his hand, it seemed like he would be able to reach it, but there was still a chance to fall into the swamp.

Gi Gi's patience was running thin as he waited, but the jellyfish just floated elsewhere again.

"Mmm..."

Unfortunately, the jellyfish was out of reach. The only way to reach it was to

traverse the swamp, but Gi Gi had no way of doing so.

When Gi Gi looked down to the ground where the jellyfish had floated over before, he noticed there were some grass there. The grass was young and lustrous. Picking it up, he ordered his beasts to go around the swamp, onwards to the north.



Gi Gi's beast horde gradually grew bigger as he proceeded to the north, but then they came across an unexpected but troublesome issue.

"GEGOO!" A newly added big eye cried, but behind that big eye were three other big eyes.

"GEGOO!" They cried.

When the big eye with a bigger eye pattern than the other big eyes cried, these three new big eyes cheered.

"Wait," Gi Gi asked to the big eye that joined the earliest with his Tacit Understanding Skill. "Why are there more of you?"

Apparently, the female big eyes seemed troubled, so they wanted to bring them along.

"Even though I'm single... Sigh... I know you need them to reproduce, but still... Hmm? They were chased away, so they don't have a place? Hmm..."

Gi Gi was hesitant to agree, but when he saw the poor big eyes crying at the back, he couldn't help but give in. Because of that, though, Gi Gi couldn't say no when the mirages and the thorn foxes asked to take along some of their own females.

"No more! No more!" Gi Gi cried.

But...

"Ki ki ki!"

"Fushu!"

The mirages and the thorn foxes cried foul.

The big eyes were allowed to take their female; not just one, but three too!

So in the end, Gi Gi had no choice but to acquiesce.

“Hmm... Fine, but you’ll keep your females to just three then, alright?”

Gi Gi’s goal was to increase his horde’s strength. He had no intentions of running a charity; adopting every troubled beast along the way was out of the question.

In the next few days, the number of dragon turtles had increased to three. The only one without a partner was the thorn dog.

“Sigh... You’re the only one left who can understand me,” Gi Gi said to the thorn dog, though for some reason the thorn dog unnaturally avoided his gaze.

“Oh no...” Gi Gi said.

“Woof...” The thorn dog’s tail dropped as its ears drooped and its thorn-like fur softened like withered leaves.

“Sigh... Well go on. Call them,” Gi Gi said.

They’ve gotten this far already; what was there to fear? It’s not like three more dogs would be an issue.

“Woof...” The thorn dog barked.

“What’s the matter? I won’t get mad, so just call them already,” Gi Gi said.

But what happened next made Gi Gi drop his jaws.

The number of thorn dogs that appeared was 10.

“Didn’t I say just three?” Gi Gi asked.

When he looked closer, he noticed over half of them were pups.

“Don’t tell me...” Gi Gi braced himself.

“Woof!” The dog happily barked.

“What do you mean you couldn’t help it!? What are we going to do with all these pups!?” Gi Gi complained.

“Woof!” Like this, the thorn dog said.

The female thorn dogs were all big. They carried their pups and placed them over their back and approached Gi Gi.

“Kuun, kuun,”

“GUnunu...”

Then they made themselves as pathetic as they could as they begged Gi Gi to let them stay.

Sorry, boss. The male thorn dog said with a sorry appearance as its harem licked its face.

It's alright, dear. I'm sure your boss won't trouble you. Our children has no where else to go, so... The female thorn dogs said to the male thorn dog.

Normally, it wouldn't be possible to hear their thoughts, but because of the Taciturn Understanding Skill that Gi Gi had, he unfortunately had to hear this pitiful exchange.

“Kuun, Kuun!” To make things worse, the pups kept on crying.

“Enough! I get it already! I hope you realize we're going to war, though!” Gi Gi said.

The thorn dog happily barked back. “Woof!” *Boss!*

“Ki ki ki!” The mirages (invisible monkeys) clapped their hands.

“GEGOo!” The big eyes flapped their wings.

“FUSHuu!” The thorn foxes jumped up and down.

“...” The dragon turtles walked as slow as ever and gave only a sleepy glance, but regardless, all the members of Gi Gi's beast horde gave their blessings to the thorn dogs.

Unfortunately, Gi Gi forgot one crucial thing.

To allow one was to allow all.

Because of that Gi Gi ended up having to build an enclosure on the backs of the dragon turtles for the newborn animals.



As Gi Gi's horde of beasts steadily grew in number, he finally managed to find some goblins. Gi Gi's goal had always been to multiply his beasts, but he also

understood that the king wished for him to gain more strength for the impending battle with the humans.

Having more goblins would only benefit them.

Unfortunately, the moment the goblins, who had left their horde to hunt, saw Gi Gi, they immediately ran. It was only a given though, since Gi Gi's horde currently consisted of 24 thorn dogs, 13 big eyes, 6 dragon turtles, 10 thorn foxes, and 7 mirages (invisible monkeys).

"Shall we give chase?" Kicking on the triple head he rode upon, Gi Gi led his beast horde on a chase for the goblins.

When Gi Gi managed to catch some of the goblins, he found out where they lived. Gi Gi thought he would talk to these new goblins to convince them to join the king, but unfortunately for him, the goblins in the village were scared out of their wits.

A giant goblin led a horde of beasts, many of which fed upon goblins.

When the goblins saw such a sight, it was only a given that they wouldn't spare a word, and instead run for their lives.

"GI, GI GI-!?" The foreign goblins ran back to their village, crying, causing the rare goblin boss of their tribe to make an appearance. But when this rare goblin saw Gi Gi and his horde of beasts, he lost all feeling in his legs.

"What's the matter?" Gi Gi asked.

The rare goblin was sat on his buttocks, his sword on the ground, as Gi Gi stopped in front of him.

Behind Gi Gi was his horde of beasts, ready to attack at a moment's notice. The thorn dogs were salivating. The mirages (invisible monkeys) had armed themselves with sticks and giant rocks. The multicolored birds – which the goblins here had never seen before – had spread their wings, making themselves look as threatening as possible. The thorn foxes' thorns looked painful as they stood up. And on the back of the giant dragon turtles were enclosures, in which several small beasts howled.

I'm going to be eaten! The rare goblin thought.

“Become my subordinate, or else—” Gi Gi thought of threatening the goblin, but before he could even finish—

“Please! Let me be your subordinate! Just don’t eat me! I beg you!” The rare goblin cried.

Gi Gi hadn’t even unsheathed his axe, so he couldn’t help but raise his brows when he saw the enemy goblin offer himself.

“...You’re not going to resist?” Gi Gi suspiciously asked.

“I won’t! I absolutely won’t!” The enemy goblin cried desperately.

“Hmm.”

Well, I suppose there are days like this too. Gi Gi thought, then he conquered the village.

“Take care of the beasts,” Gi Gi ordered. “Then I want to know whether there are other goblins and orcs around.”

Gi Gi’s trip had just begun.



Gi Gi Orudo’s level has risen.

14 => 35

Track

Success rate increased when pursing enemies.

Throw Projectile

Damage increased when throwing projectiles.

Sloppy Eater

Can eat even plants with poison.

Jeer

Attack power UP, defense power UP, speed DOWN.

Tacit Understanding

Can communicate with beasts.

Ancient Beast Tamer

Can tame more beasts.

Beast Trainer

Can train even non-combat beasts.

Cooperation

Cooperation with allies gains a bonus.

Friend of the Horde

When fighting together with beasts, the strength of the surrounding horde is increased.

Bug Eater

Attack damage increased when fighting against bug-type monsters.

Chapter 125: A Yoke that Leads to the Future

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	53
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

“What are you scheming?” I asked, my voice tinged with displeasure.

The sylph sitting before me sternly met my gaze.

“I wish to unite the elves,” Shure said.

“You want to become king?” I asked.

The king of elves, huh.

“You jest. The highest authority among us elves is the sage’s council. A lone ruler would not be accepted.”

This village doesn’t really seem against the idea, though, but regardless, it seems this man has no intentions of becoming king.

“Master Shure, written protests have come from the other forests—!” An elf said as soon as he entered the room, but when he saw me, he stopped.

“Continue,” Shure said, prompting the elf to continue.

Apparently, the other elven forests had announced their stand against Forni's decision to ally with the goblins.

"Master Fenit Symphoria of the sage's council has called for a meeting. The other forests will be attending..." The secretary-like elf was quivering, but Shure was as calm as spring rain.

"This is still within our expectations. Without a strong medicine we sylphs will never be born again. What did the Windy Forest say?" Shure said calmly.

The elf straightened up his back and looked down on the letter in his hand.

"Master Falun will be supporting Master Shure," the elf read.

"Good, then. Let the branches of the forest know that if they support me, they must gather together with their bows and quivers."

That was undoubtedly a declaration of war.

"...Milord, won't you think this over again?" The elf said after glancing at me once. "What meaning is there in shedding blood amongst elves? So long as we're able to live in the forest..."

The elf knew what he was saying was an affront to me, but he said his piece anyway. It seems the elves hold Shure in regard.

"Fei, you are a brilliant elf, but if we elves remain the way we are today, we will not be able to avoid a calamity 100 years later."

A century was still within the lifetime of an elf. In fact, it could be said to be a short period considering they themselves could live well over 200.

"Right now we must shed blood and resist the tyranny of the humans. If we don't fight while we have allies, only a future of slavery awaits us," Shure said while looking at me. "I do not wish to see such a shameful future for our proud descendants... even if it means shedding the blood of my brethren."

Shure seems young from the outward, but it seems he's already lived past a hundred years.

"Fei, gather our brethren," Shure said, still looking at me, his gaze growing sterner as the secretary-like elf left. "With this things have turned exactly as you've wished. We will be going to war together."

“I would have liked to fight alongside the whole elven race, though,” I said.

“You ask too much, but... Yes, I will see what I can. There is nothing pleasant in shedding a brother’s blood.”

“A moment ago, you mentioned the sage’s council being the highest authority, and yet... Here you are defying it. Is that not a contradiction?”

“Let my name be tainted with shame if it must, but know that though I say it is the highest authority, it is not without flaw. After all, a king’s directive is still greater than the council’s,” Shure sighed. “But alas, desperate times call for desperate measures. If the council cannot arrive at an answer on how treat the goblins, then I will give them an answer. Merely delaying the issue settles nothing.”

So he is willing to carry this shame, is he? Ironically, despite that admirable spirit of his, the more confident he is in this decision, the more he spits on the credibility of that so-called council.

“Now then, friend. The stage is exactly as you’ve desired. What will you do?” Shure’s words were provoking, but his eyes were as calm as ever, looking only on the results.

“We will lend you our strength,” I replied. “That is why we came here, after all.”

Two days later, the warriors of the Rustling Forest and the goblins numbered 400 men strong as they marched toward the Tranquil Forest.



“Call the soldiers at once!” The moment the sages of Forni and Gastair declared war, Fenit’s loud voice resounded, calling for their elven armies.

“A war among elves?” Silver from the Forest of the Lost (Sheng) shook in fear. Being of small stature, he had to look up to Fenit.

Priena from the Silent Forest (Sinfall) was dubious, but he didn’t contest Fenit.

The slender Nash from the Whispering Forest (Jirad) sarcastically smiled as he asked. “Call the soldiers? And who’s going to lead them? The old veteran, Falun, isn’t moving, while the enemy is none other than the wise and honorable Shure.

Exactly who is going to go against him? Hmm?”

“Are you scared? Of someone like him!? That won’t do, Lord Nash Jirad! That won’t do!” Fenit said.

“Hmph, I just don’t wish to see this alliance die meaninglessly,” Nash stared coldly at Fenit.

“Are you insinuating that to follow me is to walk to death!?” Fenit screamed in response.

Seeing the two argue, the small-statured Silver interjected. “U-Umm! Are we really going to battle!?”

Fenit clicked his tongue upon seeing Silver so perplexed. “Enough! I, Fenit, will dispose of them! The rest of you can just run back home to your forests and wait in fear!”

Because of the Elven Road there was a possibility for their territories to be attacked at any given time. The small Silver wasn’t the only one to shake at that thought.

“No, this is only because of our short-sightedness. Please, Lord Fenit, remember your noble heart and find it in yourself to forgive us,” Priena said, causing Fenit to snort before returning to his seat.

“It should be fine if Lord Fenit leads the army, right, Lord Nash?” Priena asked Nash, his eyes as cold as ever.

Nash smiled. “Yes, it should be fine. If Lord Priena is fine with it, then so be it.”

Priena and Nash understood each other’s intention.

By allowing Fenit and Shure to fight, they would be able to intervene later and act as an intermediary, giving them an advantageous position.

“Lord Falun seems to be quietly observing. If it’s just Shure, we should be able to manage,” Priena said, at which everyone nodded.

Though there were various differences between them, everyone was united in protecting their own positions.

“Since we’ve decided, give me the soldiers that returned just recently! Sinfall

and Jirad should give me 200 each, while Sheng should give me 300 soldiers!” Fenit demanded.

“Why is my forest the only one who has to give 300?” Silver complained.

“Shut up! If you don’t agree, I’ll take you on along with Shure!”

“But...”

In the end, Silver couldn’t argue any more, and he just muttered out a quiet ‘Fine’.

“Should have said that from the start. Hmph!” Fenit said. “Well then, gentlemen. Send your soldiers 4 days later! Dismissed!”



The corpse of the unlucky bird flew high up in the sky, eventually landing over the roof of the Fortress of the Abyss two days after Gi Ji Arsil had invoked it.

When Kuzan received the message of the unlucky bird, she stiffened up almost as if her small, white body had been hit by a club, then she immediately went to the king’s representative, Gi Ga Rax, the knight-class goblin.

His skin was a hue of deep red, and he had only an arm and a leg, along with a small horn over his head. The knight-class goblin was clearly different from the other duke class goblins. The small Kuzan looked up at his great stature filled with dignity.

“Lord Gi Ji has fallen into danger because of me. I must save him at once!”

Gi Ga Rax wielded his spear with his one arm, and then with the prosthetic leg gifted to him by a human friend, he jumped up onto his beloved steed, Hakuou.

“P-Please wait, Gi Ga. I don’t think you should go!” Kuzan said.

“What? But I was the one who asked him to go. I must go!” Gi Ga argued.

“But I don’t think the king would...”

Kuzan wondered. What would the king do? He would probably take on the humans head on, wouldn’t he? That would be bad. At the very least, Gi Ga shouldn’t try to fight the humans now.

“What about the king?” Gi Ga asked.

“Umm... No. What I mean is that the king ordered you to watch over the fortress; therefore, he probably intends for you to defend it. So, you should send someone else to help Gi Ji,” Kuzan reasoned.

Right, Gi Ga nodded.

Kuzan added. “We mustn’t engage the humans needlessly. As much as possible, we should avoid anything that would lead to an all-out war. Going out there and forcefully dragging Gi Ji out of the mouth of the tiger would be a bad idea. Not to mention that it’s not exactly feasible.”

“Hmm...”

Sending a rare-class goblin out would just end up following whatever Gi Ji wants to do, so they decided on sending the tribal chiefs instead.

“How about Lord Aluhaliha of Paradua and Lord Gilmi of Ganra?” Gi Ga said.

“Very well,” Kuzan nodded, secretly relieved he didn’t consider Rashka.

“Then please send word to them at once.”

“I understand,” Kuzan said.

Gi Ga sighed as he watched Kuzan run off. “The king would have probably easily made this decision. Sigh... As I thought, I can’t be like the king.”

Sighing, he rode Hakuou to his subordinates to train them.

The most he could do now was to pray for Gi Ji’s safety as he ran about in the forest near the Fortress.

—318 days until the war with the humans.

Chapter 126: Sylph Unification War I

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	53
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

With the unruly soldiers and the gradually approaching Rustling Forest (Forni), the goblin-elf coalition caused Fenit’s mood to worsen by the day.

Fenit sought to gain support by visiting the other village through the Elven Road, but the walls the villages had erected interfered with the spell, preventing him from reaching them.

“Silver Sheng, Nash Jirad, even Priena! What is wrong with you? Have you been seized with fear!?” Fenit slammed the table as he yelled at the soldiers of Symphoria standing before him, not an elf looked up to meet his gaze. “How infuriating... Fine, if this is how they want to play it, we’ll just have to go ourselves. I, Fenit, will open the eyes of the Forni myself! But before that I’ll start with that brat, Silver! I’ll show him the price of humiliating me!”

In his anger, Fenit ordered his men to march to the nearby Forest of the Lost (Sheng). His army numbered 500-men strong. There was no power in the hot sands of the southern desert able of contesting the elves, so the Tranquil Forest (Symphoria) had much room to grow. Fenit took roughly half of their great

army.

The army included Pale, who was also an elf of Symphoria. Since returning to Symphoria, she has bowed her head countless times to strangers in her search for Selena; and in the end, she concluded that Selena must be with the goblins.

She would go to them now to prove her conclusions true, but she didn't think it feasible to grab Selena from right under the goblins' noses. Moreover, Forni had formed an alliance with the goblins. As far as they were concerned, she was an enemy. The Elven Road was not omnipotent.

Even if she manages to make contact with Selena, how would she escape with her?

To go by herself meant to move through enemy lines alone; the goblins and the Forni who have accepted them. Running away surely wouldn't be easy. Not to mention, Pale wouldn't even dream of taking an army alone, though it was precisely because she understood her limits that she was cautious.

The first most important thing an adventurer must learn is to know one's limits.

After discerning what one can do and cannot do, one must then do his best according to those limits. Pale learned that after joining the ^{Elks} Soar to Freedom Clan.

Using the same method, Pale concluded that the best way to meet Selena was to move with Fenit's army.

"I'm not wrong, am I, Touri?" Pale muttered to herself, calling out the name of their leader as she rebuked herself for her weakness.

"So this is were you were," a voice called out from behind Pale as she was doing maintenance on her bow and quiver. When she turned around, a young elf her age was there.

"Felbi, what's the matter?" Pale said.

"...Nothing. I just wanted to see your face a bit," shrugged the elf who was one of the commanding officers of Symphoria's army. Felbi Anthra, though young he is an elf accomplished in both archery and magic. He is one of the

friends that Pale still has contact with even after her long absence.

“Is Fenit still throwing a tantrum? Sorry about that. I’m his relative, so let me apologize in his place,” Pale said.

“I haven’t even said anything,” Felbi said.

“You’re making that face though.”

“Alright, I give. You hit it right on the money,” Felbi sighed as he sat beside Pale and worked maintenance on his short sword. As he rubbed his short sword made out of Srilana, he talked about Fenit. When he got to the part where Fenit ordered them to march to the Forest of the Lost, Pale raised her two well-shaped brows.

“It’s not something to praise, but... I don’t think he’s wrong,” Pale said.

“And I thought you’d surely be against it,” Felbi said, looking at Pale as if he was looking at someone for the first time.

“You might not want to hear this, Felbi, but I think the Goblin-Forni Alliance is a force to be reckoned with. Gathering numbers to overcome that isn’t a bad move; and since they agreed during the meeting, they should honor their promise... even if that promise was made due to a threat.”

“Because it’s the duty of the nobles, huh. Pretty harsh, aren’t we?”

In the end, negotiations were just tools executed upon the stage that is power. That was true for the humans; and it rings true even for the elves.

“But I guess it can’t be helped if we’re to defeat Forni,” Felbi sighed as he sheathed his short sword.

“Perhaps,” Pale agreed. “For the sake of peace.”

When they stood up and were about to bid each other farewell, the tumultuous noise of a violent wind and the sight of the chief’s roofs being blown away hit them.



They’re not attacking.

That’s something to be celebrated, I suppose.

This whole thing began because of Shure's unexpected declaration of war, but it seems to be going exactly as he planned. Currently, our forces are marching together with the elves surrounding the goblins from the outside.

The road in the forest had been maintained well enough to allow even an army our size to go through. It wasn't paved with stones, but it was wide enough to accommodate us; moreover, the needless stones have been removed and the land has been leveled.

I wanted to ask Shure why their roads were like this, but after seeing him busy dealing with all the reports, I decided to postpone the trivial questions for later. In fact, even the usually chattering goblin horde was acting as if they'd been forbidden from talking.

When Shure finished hearing out the scouts' reports, I spoke to him. "Things sure are going smoothly. I thought for sure the other villages would attack you."

"We've already made our move. Right now, the other villages shouldn't even have the leisure of sending out their army."

Assassins? Shure was still free, so I asked.

"Did you have the other leaders assassinated?" I asked.

"No... Well, we've gotten this far so it shouldn't make any difference. There are other people among the sylph who share my misgivings; such elves aren't limited to those in my village," Shure said.

So he had those elves do something then? Did he tell them to attack? No, that would be too weak. A separate attack force isn't impossible, but he said the other villages won't even have the leisure of sending out their army, so it would have to be something even stronger than that.

"You incited a rebellion?"

"...Bingo."

Just a bit I saw a glimpse of what this man is worrying about. There were indeed people who share his misgivings in the other forests, but they were by no means many. Otherwise, he would have simply had the other chiefs exiled. The fact that he had to resort to a rebellion meant that he didn't have enough

influence otherwise to cripple the other forests.

The only way to affect the other forests was for him to make a desperate move. A desperate move that would mean death if anything were to go wrong.

“We can go faster if you want,” I said.

“But...” Shure said, hesitant.

“It’s fine, we’re used to wars. We’re not pushing ourselves.”

“...Thank you. Fei, order the army to go faster!”

Nodding, his secretary ordered the soldiers. “Elites of Forni! Let us make haste! There is no weakling among us only capable of moving so slowly!”

I raised my voice as well.

At that, the elves and the goblins both quickened their pace.

Like that we headed to the nearby Silent Forest (Sinfall).



Bui groaned when he saw the goblin that was brought to the village.

“Food!” The kobolds, on the other hand, demanded food as usual as they bit him by the legs.

“What to do, Bui? That goblin is that goblin’s subordinate, right? It’s black and big too,” Gui said.

Bui could only nod his head despite being troubled. “Let’s heal him first. Remove the arrow lodged into his back, then apply some herbs.”

“Wouldn’t that be bad? If he dies, it’ll be our fault,” Goi said as he quivered in fear.

Bui shook his head. “I think it would be worse if we just threw him away and did nothing. Even if he dies, it should be fine as long as we tried our best.”

Bui’s words gradually grew weaker until they were completely powerless by the end of his speech. Gui and Goi glanced at each other at that, then sighing, they carried the goblin into a house. It was a house made only out of wood and the skin of animals, but it was much better than nothing.

Washing the goblin's wounds with water purified by Doralia, they rubbed some herbs on them to hasten their recovery. After that, all that was left was to wait for the goblin's leaf-covered wounds to recover.

"Food!" Meanwhile, the kobolds were still clinging onto Bui. When he finally took out some meat, they started salivating.

"Aight, now you boys go over there-" Bui threw the meat away, causing the kobolds to run after it. It was then that someone called out to him.

"Bui! The goblin is awake!" When he turned around, he saw that it was Goi, who had come running out from inside the house.

Inside the house.

"...Ugh, bastards... you're... orcs," the goblin said, still clearly in pain.

Contrary the goblin's seemingly hostile appearance, however, Bui was quite relieved to see him alive.

"Don't worry, we won't eat you," Bui said.

"Bastards, I know... you... eat our kind!" The goblin said.

"I am Bui, the ruler of this orc village. I have no intentions of antagonizing your king."

The blue goblin – the assassin, Gi Ji Arsil – groaned when he heard those words tinged with intelligence; that was something far too rare for the orcs.

"Anyhow, it should be far too difficult for you to be moving around, so just lie down and rest," Bui said before leaving Goi behind to tend to the goblin, while he left with the others.

"It's good he didn't die. For the meantime, let's observe him. He's probably hungry, so we'll have to feed him some meat," Bui said as he ordered the other orcs and thought of the actions they would be taking.

The wounded goblins was found in the area the king gave them, the area south the lake. The arrow lodged into his back was exquisitely made, something far too difficult for the goblins and orcs.

That being said, the enemy was most likely human.

Had the humans invaded the forest once more? Or did the goblin come from outside the forest?

There was much to confirm.

“Gui, I have a request.”

The chief of the orc village began his own investigation.

—316 days until the war with the humans.

Chapter 127: Sylph Unification War II

TI Note: Correction, the goblin-elf army isn't heading to the Tranquil Forest (Symphoria) but to the Silent Forest (Sinfall). Also, the elves are around the goblins, not the other way around.

Status	
Race	Goblin
Level	53
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King's Soul; Ruler's Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake's Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

“Swordsmen forward!”

At Shure’s behest, the melee soldiers moved up to the front. I thought for sure the elves would be attacking from a distance, preferring to use a bow and quiver, but contrary to my expectations, many of the elves were outfitted with a shield and sword. They bravely ventured out to the frontlines, where they climbed up the defensive walls erected to protect the village.

We encountered little resistance as we entered the Silent Forest (Sinfall). Arrows would be shot at us from time to time, but such half-hearted response could not stop the might of 400 warriors.

“Find Priena! Ignore the fodders!”

All men moved on foot, the elves forming the outer perimeter, while the

goblins formed the heart of the formation. I ran side-by-side Shure, who ordered the swordsmen to push into the residence of the village chief. At the same time, he ordered to suppress the vital facilities. As expected, Shure is skilled. He even managed to gather enough information on the enemy beforehand.

If he didn't know where all the important facilities and what kind of army the enemy had we wouldn't be able to occupy the village so easily.

"The enemy chief, Priena Sinfall, has run away with 50 soldiers!" An elf reported.

"Where to?" Shure asked.

"To the south!"

I don't know if this is what they mean by 'when the gong is hit it echoes', but I decided to offer the chief's head as a present to decorate this victory.

"We'll pursue them," I said.

"Please," Shure said.

Hearing Shure agree, I ordered the goblins. "Riders of Paradua, ride ahead and stop the enemy! Archers of Ganra, Ru Rou shall lead you to support the riders of Paradua. Gi Jii take 40 and go with Shure. Everyone else follow me!"

Quickly ordering the soldiers, I filled my legs with ether and bolted off.

I chased after Priena with my sword at the ready.



As we left the village, we ran through the road going south.

I ran at the vanguard, leading the goblins behind me through the leveled road, while the beast-riders informed us that they had already made contact with the enemy through the archers of Ganra.

Directing ether to my ears to sharpen my hearing, I heard throes of pain and angry voices from up ahead.

"Hurry!" I ordered.

Unsheathing my sword, I stepped into the ground and bolted for the area up

ahead.

“Your Highness, the enemy is up ahead!” Ru Rou, who had gone ahead, said.

I leapt as soon as I saw the opposing elven army.

Enchant

“Turn me into a blade!”

Black flames erupted from the base of the hilt, cladding the whole blade in black ember as it descended with the force of gravity into an enemy elf.

Without even the time to cry out, the enemy elf was cleaved in two.

The surrounding elves were aghast upon seeing me, and not an eek came out of their lips. It didn’t matter, though, because I was never one to let my enemies off lightly.

“GURUUuoOOAaOO!” As I bellowed out the World-Devouring Howl, I swept at the surrounding elves with my long sword, lopping off their head and dyeing the ground in their blood.

After seeing me instantly kill the elves around me, the enemy finally woke up from their stupor and an enemy elf cried.

“Goblin!” The enemy cried. “Kill him!”

Too slow!

Shield

“Let my body be inviolable!”

The bow was at a disadvantage in a close-up fight, so the enemy elf put his bow away and unsheathed his dagger.

The enemy elf struck out with his dagger, but my Shield repelled it. The elves attacked from every direction, but I cut each and every one of them down easily, causing the enemy elves’ face to twist in fright. There were some brave ones who still fought despite seeing my Shield, however.

“Don’t look down on us, monster!!” An elf soldier cried as he jumped at me with his sword.

For some reason, I decided to dodge that one.

Good thing I did, as that sword of his managed to tear away a thin portion of

my Shield's black flames. That weapon must be made out of the elves' special metals, either Srilana or Orichalcum.

In front of weapons like those, Shield is meaningless!

When the enemy attacked again, I met its weapon with my own, but unfortunately, its short sword actually cut into my sword.

What an insanely sharp weapon.

Jubilation filled the elf's face. Victory was his, he must've thought.

Stupid. If your weapon is stuck in mine, how are you going to dodge my next attack?

Releasing my long sword, I curled my hand into fist and slammed it into the happy elf's face. The sound of bones breaking resounded as the elf flew away, then I took out another sword by my waist and fixed my stance.

"S-Stay away from that—!" An elf cried as he sought to make some distance between us, but unfortunately, my sword found its way into his back before he could flee.

He was the only one I managed to kill, however, as the other elves safely managed to jump onto the branches of the trees nearby or hide in the bushes; they readied their bows.

That was fast. As expected of the elves who are said to be friends of the forest.

Unfortunately, they were too late. It might be because of their inexperience at war, but they moved a moment too late.

"Stop that goblin!" An elf ordered, at which the other elves all aimed their bows at me.

The elves were unequaled as hunters. Their bows were fast and strong, and they could instantly take down any prey they set their eyes upon.

"Fir—What!?" Just when the elves were about to shoot, the arrows of Ganra's archers came pouring down.

"Shoot down the elves away from His Highness!" The young commander of

Ganra, Ru Rou, ordered.

The archers of Ganra were skilled hunters as well; therefore, the moment the elves decided to jump on top of branches, their fate was sealed. The only reason the archers of Ganra refused to shoot was because I was nearby. Now that the elves had willingly distanced themselves from me, the Ganra could cover the sky in their arrows as they pleased.

Meanwhile, the goblins that had gone ahead came back and attacked. The fierce and powerful goblins of Gaidga slammed their clubs, each one as big as the elves themselves, into the slender bodies of the elven forces, while the wide-eyed Gi Jii charged with the normal goblins and their spear.

“R-Run!” The moment the elves cried out that word, our victory was secured.

A systematic retreat allows one to minimize casualties, but... This... This is just asking to be killed.

“After them! Take their heads!” I ordered as I watched the elves run away without any order.

The goblins cheered at my command; and in the end, about 40 of the 50 elves were slain.

Unfortunately, we couldn't get Priena's head.



Meanwhile, while Shure was invading the Silent Forest (Sinfall), the life and death battle that took place in Fenit's residence ended.

Shure's advocates had attacked Fenit.

Shure had many supporters even among Fenit's guard; and because Fenit didn't even consider the possibility, they managed to attack him. There were many among the commanding officers who shared Shure's thoughts.

Fenit was completely blindsided when Shure's faction attacked, but fortunately for him, luck was on his side. In Fenit's fit of anger, he accidentally blew the roof off his residence, prompting Pale and the other warriors outside to enter his house, swaying the advantage back to Fenit's side.

Pale and the other warriors asked Shure's faction to surrender, but they

ignored their plea and fought until the last man. In the end, they all died.

“We can’t delay anymore! The devil’s hand might have reached even Silver!” Fenit loudly said in high spirits. “This is clearly Shure’s— No. The ploy of the goblins and the elves working with them who look down on us elves! This is no longer just a war, but a holy war!”

Fenit turned to Pale with a sharp gaze. “My dear cousin, this is a holy war, thus I cannot show favoritism! You shall join Commander Felbi and his squad to bring aid to the Forest of the Lost (Sheng)!”

“I was actually about to ask that myself...” Pale quietly muttered.

Fenit was being threatening, but in the end, he just pushed her to go exactly where she wanted to go.

“Go now!” Fenit commanded.

“Alright...” Pale said.

If war were to break out, the only way she would be able to save Selena is to end the war quickly.

That was the conclusion Pale arrived to, so she chose to go to the battlefield.

“Are you sure?” A guard asked Fenit after Pale left.

Fenit’s face twisted in anger. “Who do you think is responsible for that attack just now? Do you really think it was Shure’s ploy?”

“H-Huh?” The soldier was confused.

“It’s Pale’s supporters! The people who want her to become chief!”

Fenit believed that it was actually Pale behind the attack just now.

“B-But didn’t Master Pale run to help just now?” The soldier reasoned.

“She probably just wanted to see my corpse!”

“T-Then are you saying...”

“Yes! Pale must die in this war!”



Bui frowned upon hearing the leader-class orc, Gui’s, report.

“There is a human village right next to the forest...”

Bui folded his arms as he sat cross-legged.

“I want to think,” Bui said before leaving Gui.

Whenever Bui wanted to ponder something, he would always go to the mother tree, Doralia.

“A frontal attack on the humans would only serve to increase our casualties, but... If the human village were to be completed, we might lose our chance to stop them. Will we have to move again? I don’t think there’s a place better than here, though.”

There was plenty of food here in the south. The strongest influence were the goblins living in the west, but the orcs had a good relationship with them, so they were no problem. If Bui could just deal with the threat in the east, he would be able to ensure his village’s safety.

If ever he did need to escape, the only path he would be able take would be the north, but because they’ve been developing the south so much, they haven’t had any opportunity to scout there.

Right now they had 150 orc warriors and 70 orc females. There weren’t many places that could accommodate a village their size.

The humans coming back stronger than before meant that there was a country behind them. That’s the only reason they would be able to put so much power into the frontline.

What they were doing wasn’t much different with the goblins.

The goblins moved to the west, and then pushed the orcs toward the east, where the frontline was. In one sense, it could be said that the goblins were keeping the orcs from running away.

That leaves little room for the orcs to maneuver.

What should Bui do to ensure the orcs’ safety?

What’s the matter, Bui?

“Ah, Doralia.” Bui decided to talk about their current predicament to Doralia.

When Doralia finished hearing him out, she spoke.

I see... So you want to protect this village.

“Y-Yes... That’s right.” As Bui leaned onto Doralia, he looked up at the branches that blocked the sun’s rays.

“If the enemy forces are strong, then...”

They should just weaken them.

“Hmm... Right, right... I see.. No, but...”

Doralia quietly watched over Bui as he pondered to himself.

The next day, Bui took two orcs with him and created a new village to the east.

It was a small village, but that was enough to create a breakwater between the orc village and the humans; a village to protect the flourishing orc village, so to speak.

How Bui’s plans would fare was yet unknown, but the orcs’ influence was gradually getting stronger.

—314 days until the battle with the humans.



Level has risen.

53 => 54



Intermission: Gi Zu’s Duel Record I

Status	
Name	Gi Zu Ruo
Race	Goblin
Level	1
Class	Noble
Possessed	Overpowering Howl; Throw Projectile; Spear Mastery B-; Instant Kill; Mad

Skills	Shishi; Bite
Divine Protection	Mad God (Zu Oru)
Attributes	None

Brushing off the approaching blade, Gi Zu thrust the butt of his spear into the side of the enemy goblin rare. As the enemy goblin rare flew through the air, he followed after him, then as he tried to pick himself up, hit his legs. No longer able to stand the pain, the goblin rare fell to the ground. Gi Zu grabbed his head with one hand.

“Surrender, or else...” Gi Zu threatened to crush the enemy goblin’s head with his hand.

The goblin rare cried as Gi Zu gripped tighter and tighter, until eventually, he was at the brink of losing consciousness.

“I give, I give! Spare me!” The goblin rare cried.

“Good,” Gi Zu said.

Upon release, the goblin rare prostrated himself before Gi Zu, who looked down at him for a moment before turning to eye the surrounding normal goblins.

He spoke in a commanding tone. “From this day onwards, this village belongs to I, Gi Zu Ruo! If you resist, you will die!”

After being sent away by the king to expand the horde, Gi Zu Ruo renewed his loyalty to the king.

“I need to be more like Lord Gi Ga,” he muttered.

During the battle with the Orc King, Gi Ga Rax lost an arm and a leg to ensure the king’s victory. Though at the time Gi Zu did not understand it, the king rewarded Gi Ga with a rider-beast, and then the humans whom Gi Ga had befriended gave him a new leg. To Gi Zu, Gi Ga was a person worthy of admiration.

Gi Zu had been wielding a spear for as far as he could recall. Not long after he was born in the same village as Gi Ga, he was taken into Gi Ga’s spear squad, and then they fought against the orc king. It was then that he received the

blessing of the mad god and recklessly cut down enemy after enemy.

By the time he realized it, he had evolved from a mere goblin into something with relatively more wisdom.

Gi Zu was grateful for his good fortune that allowed him to survive despite recklessly running around wildly by himself.

As he walked along the area, he thought to himself, *This fortune must also be because of the king and Lord Gi Ga.*

If so, then he must fulfill his mission and gather more goblins for the king.

Goblins didn't grow on trees, however; therefore, he had no choice but to look for the small goblin villages scattered throughout the forest, gathering the small hordes one at a time.

A few days after Gi Zu parted with the king, he came across a small goblin village.

It was a small horde of 30 goblins, but Gi Zu valiantly charged in head-on and challenged their chief. The enemy chief being a goblin rare, naturally could not win against Gi Zu, who was not only a goblin noble but also a battle-scarred veteran. After suppressing them, Gi Zu immediately made them swear fealty to the king, then he asked the goblin rare of the other goblin hordes living nearby.

It was then that he found out there was another goblin noble nearby.

"Oh? is that goblin stronger than me?" Gi Zu asked.

"I don't know, but... He's big and his weapon is strong," the goblin replied.

Gi Zu thought it unfortunate that the goblin rare couldn't tell him more, but he had his own ideas when it came to these sort of matters.

"I'll just have to see him for myself then." Gi Zu fiercely smiled as he decided to have the goblin rare lead him to that goblin noble. "Hmm... But before that..."

Gi Zu was born after the king had occupied Gi Village; therefore, unlike the first generation goblins, he was born at a time when the food was plenty.

Because Gi Zu himself had never experienced starvation, he found the sight of

the emaciating goblins ridiculous.

There was a considerable difference between the height of the rare-class goblins raised in Gi Village and the goblins here. The king himself hadn't intended it, but by fixing the food issue in Gi Village, the goblins at Gi Village were able to grow bigger than other goblins.

"What do you sorry gobs think of filling your belly with some meat?" Gi Zu asked, at which the surrounding goblins all gulped, prompting Gi Zu to raise his spear and laugh. "Hah! Then I guess we're eating first!"

There were about 30 goblins all-in-all in the village. Gi Zu took three normal goblins with him and entered the forest to look for some prey. A little later, they managed to hunt a beast. In doing so, Gi Zu did not only secure food for the village, but he also managed to teach the three normal goblins how to work together.

At first, the goblins didn't understand too well, but after the second and third hunt, they finally grasped it. Unfortunately, they couldn't stay any longer, as the other goblins were waiting at the village with empty bellies.

Their hunt for the day were a double head, a spear deer, and a big-horned deer. Just that three by themselves were enough to make the goblins of the village wide-eyed. They had never seen a feast of this scale before!

"Now feast!" Gi Zu said.

At first, the goblins couldn't believe their eyes when they saw Gi Zu treat them to this feast, but when they realized he was being serious, they unabashedly dug in to this sumptuous feast.

Until now the goblin rare had always monopolized the village's hunts, but after the feast, even the rare-class goblin had a sense of satisfaction he had never before experienced.

To these goblins, Gi Zu's existence was like that of a savior.

"Why would you give us meat?" One of the goblins asked.

"Why? Because you're hungry! Of course, I would give you meat. Are we not comrades who have sworn to follow the king?" Gi Zu replied.

Putting it positively, Gi Zu was optimistic; negatively, Gi Zu was ignorant of hardship; and to the goblins of this village, that attitude of his was nothing short of shocking. Food was supposedly something a goblin bet his whole existence on just to secure, and yet here was a goblin who generously gave it away. Much in the same way that Gi Ga swore absolute fealty to the king, these simple goblins were greatly touched by his actions.

The normal goblins could not comprehend what Gi Zu was talking about. It was simply far too complicated for them, but at the very least they understood Gi Zu's greatness and the fact that behind him was someone even greater.

The rare-class goblin alone was puzzled.

He couldn't help himself but ask. "King? Are you not the king?"

"The king is the great goblin to whom I have sworn my spear. He should be somewhere north of us. Right now, we are gathering strength for the sake of the coming war with the humans. Once you meet him, I'm sure you will understand his greatness," Gi Zu said.

The rare-class goblin couldn't help but blink his eyes upon realizing that there was a goblin even greater than this one standing before him.

"I will never forget that you gave me meat," the rare-class goblin said.

Gi Zu happily nodded.



In the end, Gi Zu decided to stay in the village for a few more days. The rare-class goblin earnestly offered the females to Gi Zu, but Gi Zu was someone born under the rule of the king. As far as he was concerned, embracing the females was a reward given only to those worthy, usually because of some merit made.

To Gi Zu, sharing food with his comrades wasn't anything special. That's why despite the goblins sentimentally offering the females to him, he couldn't help but feel that accepting them would still slight the king's law. As a noble who has been given the right to have a household, to break the king's law would be to spit in the face of the king and Lord Gi Ga, whom he holds in esteem. Which is why, in the end, Gi Zu decided to return the females to the village.

“I am glad that you offered them to me, but as someone with a household, I must refuse,” Gi Zu said.

Wry smiles were had as Gi Zu returned the females to the village. Not to mention, the goblins were again moved at his actions.

To happily receive the females was a given to the goblins, so his refusal was truly shocking.

After a few days passed, the goblins had completely taken to revering Gi Zu. During this time, Gi Zu had taught the rest of the goblins how to work together and set traps. By doing so, he would be able to ensure that they wouldn't die even without him.

Of course, Gi Zu had no intentions of dying, but the enemy was another noble class. In the unfortunate scenario where he perishes in battle, the king must be informed of the existence of a formidable goblin in the southwest. Even if he can't win against the goblin, the king and Lord Gi Ga might be able to.

Because of that he asked the goblins of the village to send a message to the king. This is the reason why he taught them how to feed themselves and ensured that they wouldn't die.

After a few more days passed, when the rare-class goblin, who was the former boss of the village, had fully learned how to set traps, Gi Zu decided to go back to his original objective.

“I wish to challenge the strongest goblin in the area,” Gi Zu said.

Of course, the goblins earnestly tried to stop him. He was their benefactor. If they were to lose him now, the village's bright future would surely be dampened.

It was a complicated matter too hard for the normal goblins to understand, but when they realized that the boss who gave them food might die, they were greatly disheartened. They held onto his sleeves, begging him not to fight the noble-class goblin.

Unfortunately, Gi Zu had made his resolve.

In the end, the rare-class goblin led Gi Zu to the cave where the noble class

goblin lived.



The rare goblin turned back to Gi Zu, as if asking if he were sure about this, but he just hurried him up, and eventually, they arrived at the area right next to the cave. By then it was nighttime.

As Gi Zu ordered the normal goblin they caught along the way to inform the noble goblin of his challenge, the rare-class goblin's anxiety worsened.

Gi Zu told the rare-class to go before he went to the cave. When he got to the cave, the noble-class goblin and his horde had already gathered there.

"So you're the bastard who wants to challenge me," a noble-class goblin even bigger than Gi Zu said. There was an old scar extending from his shoulder to chest.

"I am Gi Zu Ruo. I have come here at the command of the king. I challenge you, ruler of these lands!" Gi Zu boldly proclaimed.

For a moment, the enemy noble was wide-eyed, but a little later, he laughed loudly.

"HA HA HA! FOOL! This isn't the sort of forest a soft fool like yourself can live in! Kill him!" The enemy noble said.

Normal and rare goblins smiled as they unsheathed their weapons and surrounded Gi Zu.

Gi Zu's gaze grew cold as he eyed the surrounding enemies and readied his spear.

"So you can't even accept a challenge. It seems the only thing big about you is your body," Gi Zu said.

"I'd like to see just how much longer you'll be able to keep up that stupid act. Kill him!" The enemy noble commanded.

The surrounding enemy goblins all attacked at the same time.

A club came swinging from behind, but Gi Zu deflected it with the butt of his spear in a speed twice as fast as the club. A sharpened picket came thrusting

from the left, but Gi Zu inclined his upper half, letting it slip through. At the same time, Gi Zu used the momentum of his spear to strike at the goblin whose club he'd deflected, then he swept at the goblins coming at him from the right and from in front. The only remaining goblin was the one with a picket, but when the spear returned from its course, it took its head with it.

Gi Zu exhaled.

"Mercy will not be shown to those who fight. I am Gi Zu Ruo, representative of the great king and first disciple of the indomitable Gi Ga Rax!" Gi Zu declared.

"Don't cower! No matter how strong he is, he's just one guy! Kill him with numbers!" The enemy noble-class goblin declared, prompting the surrounding goblins to tighten their encirclement on Gi Zu.

Breathing out faintly once, Gi Zu took a step forward then struck his spear into the corpse of the goblin he'd killed moments ago. With great power, he lifted up the corpse.

"GURUoOOO!"

Then he threw the corpse up front toward one part of the encirclement.

The surrounding goblins didn't think he would try to pull off a stunt like that with his spear; they couldn't help but cry out in surprise. Even the rare goblins in the path of the thrown corpse were so shocked that they forgot to move away. Because of that they ended up getting hit by the corpse.

In the midst of all the surprise and confusion, Gi Zu stepped forward. He skewered the rare goblins buried under the corpse, then as he pulled his spear out, he swung his spear and swept around him.

Finally, the goblins awoke from their stupor. Immediately, they tried to attack Gi Zu, but their uncoordinated attacks were easily dodged, then Gi Zu struck them dead. Gradually, Gi Zu neared the enemy noble-class goblin.

A spear lunged at Gi Zu from both flanks, but he twisted his body and dodged, allowing him to leap through the opened path.

A goblin immediately came running for him from behind, however; but Gi Zu quickly dealt with him by burying the butt of his spear into the solar plexus of

the goblin. Unfortunately for the goblin, it ended up hitting the center of his chest instead, giving rise to one last throe before he breathed his last and collapsed.

Gi Zu didn't even turn around to confirm he was dead. The sounds were enough.

Gi Zu ran for the enemy noble goblin.

Meanwhile, the enemy goblin was gradually realizing how strong Gi Zu was, causing panic to well up within him. Gi Zu's spear handling, his ability to quickly see the hole in the encirclement, and his courage which allowed him to stand fearless in the face of a horde. All these things proved to the noble-class goblin that Gi Zu was far stronger than him.

The individual's strength wasn't the only deciding factor in becoming leader of a horde, however.

"Gi?" A goblin cried out.

The enemy noble-class goblin had grabbed the head of a normal goblin, causing the goblin to cry out. But without caring one bit for it, he threw the normal goblin at Gi Zu.

"Nu!?"

Gi Zu was taken by surprise with the appearance of a giant object suddenly flying toward him. After dealing with two goblins who came at him from his flanks, he swung his spear to deflect the object flying toward him. He didn't know what it was, but when he recognized the detestable sound of a spear, he quickly twisted his body. Gi Zu managed to avoid the trajectory of the flying goblin.

An anguished cry rose when the goblin hit the ground, but the enemy noble-class goblin was faintly smiling.

Gi Zu glared at him. "What do you think your comrades are!?"

The enemy laughed loudly at Gi Zu's angry outburst. "These guys live for my sake. They should be happy to be of use."

The sound of teeth being ground resounded from Gi Zu's mouth.

That's impossible, he thought. Whether it was the Gi Village, the Fortress of the Abyss, or the tribes... everyone helped each other to live. When the humans attacked, everyone stood together to face them. It didn't matter whether one was a normal class or a noble class.

Everyone was equal under the king.

Even a normal or a rare could be recognized as long as he showed results. Anyone could be rewarded with a female or given good food to eat. Even our fealty to the king was something we swore on our own volition. We were never forced!

“Are you really ok with this!?” Gi Zu glared at the goblins around him as he spun his spear.

The normal goblins backed off at the pressure emanating from Gi Zu, but the rare goblins wore a cold smile on their faces.

“Looks like everyone agrees with me. Now I think I’m about fed up with that stupid look on your face! Finish him!”

At the noble goblin’s behest, the normal and rare goblins charged. The rare goblins swung their spears from the back while the normal goblins acted as living shields at the front.

30 days after Gi Zu accepted this mission from the king, he found himself in a predicament.



Gi Zu’s level has risen.

1 => 15



Chapter 128: Sylph Unification War III

TI Note: Correction, blue steel to blue-silver steel.

Status	
Race	Goblin
Level	54
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

“Thank you... Truly,” Silver said to Felbi.

Felbi led a preemptive squad into the Forest of the Lost (Sheng), under the assumption that the village would be suffering an internal conflict, an assumption proved true the moment they invaded the village.

By utilizing Pale’s plans, Felbi was able to expel the Shure Faction, and in the blink of an eye, brought control of the village back to Silver.

“Messenger!”

As Silver and his people were expressing their thanks to Felbi, a messenger came running to them in ragged breaths.

The Silent Forest (Sinfall) had fallen.

“That fast? No, with the villages in chaos, I suppose it could be possible,” Felbi muttered.

Nodding, Pale touched her slender chin and asked. “Lord Silva... If I recall correctly, doesn’t Sheng have a huge supply of Blue-Silver Steel (Srilana)?”

Silver nodded though he wasn’t sure what she had in mind.

Pale turned to Felbi. “It’s probable that they’re able to go so fast because of the lack of heavy armor. It might be best to ignore their speed and focus on our preparations. That way we can take them by surprise once they get here.”

“What about Lord Nash Jirad? Won’t he make it in time?” Felbi asked full anxiety.

But Pale’s words were as cold as ice, calmly continuing despite her friend’s apparent anxiety. “Lord Silver, please prepare some Srilana armor and Orichalcum weapons for Symphoria.”

“The chaos in the village has been suppressed to some extent... I’ll prepare as much as I can.” Silver nodded.

Pale smiled at that, then she walked away with Felbi.

Their battle had just begun.

As far as Pale was concerned, the sooner this needless war ended the better.

Though it did beg the question. Why would the wise and heroic Shure choose to ally himself with the goblins? The goblins were unintelligent brutes that destroyed crops and kidnapped the women of other races. The elves wouldn’t lose to them even if they were to come in great numbers.

Besides, the elf villages had a barrier that led others astray. It should be very difficult for the goblins to get through.

There should be a deeper reason behind this whole plot.

Perhaps Shure Forni intends to use this as an opportunity to lead the sylphs himself. Or perhaps his renown of being heroic and wise was nothing more than a sham, and in fact, he was nothing more than an ambitious chief.

Such lowly characters were common among the humans. Could Shure be one of them? Regardless, however, it was undeniable that he has indeed joined hands with the goblins and has instigated his sympathizers to cause havoc in the villages. In fact, no one even knew of his sympathizers in Symphoria until

the moment he made his move.

Pale couldn't understand.

Did Shure Forni have a reason to betray the elves? Impossible. If that were the case, the entire Tranquil Forest (Forni) wouldn't have chosen to follow him, and he wouldn't have sympathizers in every village.

If his renown for his wisdom is indeed not a lie, then could it be that there is something he wishes to accomplish even if it means using the goblins?

Could it be related to the demihumans? Some of them live in the west and south, but most of them live in the east. But no... That's not possible either. If the elves were under the demihumans, perhaps, but the elves were masters over the demihumans.

Could it be an enemy? Was he driven to a corner?

But what could...

The humans are still a long way away to the east.

Perhaps the goblins are actually strong.

"There's not enough information."

Pale and Felbi sighed as they walked.

They had 200 elven warriors under them. At most, they just wanted to avoid letting them die a meaningless death.

But when the worst possible outcome was considered, Pale decided they had to make their move.

"Felbi, I have a proposal," Pale said as she looked up Felbi.

Felbi nodded upon hearing her plan.



Meanwhile, while Pale and Felbi were fighting to free the Forest of the Lost (Sheng), Shure led the goblin-elf army to their next objective.

After occupying the Silent Forest (Sinfall), Shure and the Goblin King decided to split their army into two. One would head to Sheng, while the other would

head to the Whispering Forest (Jirad).

At this point, all Shure knew was that his sympathizers were causing havoc in two villages. After all, he needed to spend some of his men to look for Priena and it was also important for his people to lay low when communicating with the Tranquil Forest (Forni). Not to mention, it was indeed exceedingly difficult to quell the unrest in the recently occupied Sinfall while moving his people at the same time; hence, it was by no means incompetence that left Shure in the dark of Pale and Felbi's accomplishments.

The goblins could not possibly quell the unrest among the elves, so naturally, such business fell to Shure's hands. Unfortunately, juggling politics and military was truly difficult.

"Our goals are to take back Sheng and Jirad. Once we've accomplished this, we'll be able to pressure Symphoria," Shure said to the Goblin King as they both looked at the map

The Goblin King touched his thick chin. "Fighting two fronts is quite daring."

Shure nodded. "We don't have time. My sympathizers in the other villages are getting fewer. We have to move quickly."

It would be a lie to say that Shure himself was not in a hurry. After all, he wanted to reward the sympathizers who have sacrificed much for his cause.

"...Very well. It is indeed best to attack while the enemy villages are in chaos."

The reason the Goblin King agreed was also in due part to his own calculations. He wanted to deliver a powerful blow to the elves before giving them a chance to pick themselves back up.

The elves thought similarly of the other races, but the goblins in particular were considered to be the lowest of them all.

Be it the demihumans, the elves, the monsters, or the humans, in the whole wide world, the goblins alone were considered as the weakest and most savage race that could never be trusted.

It was not completely unfounded, however, as even the Goblin King himself couldn't deny that. But there was a danger to the goblin's ill-reputation,

especially for the Goblin King who wished to build his own country.

The weak would be weeded out.

Ever since the Goblin King was born, the law of the jungle had been stuffed into his face, a law that proved even truer for organizations.

A benevolent country that would lend a hand to a country unworthy of an alliance did not exist; hence, the Goblin King wanted to first show the elves that the goblins weren't something to be disdained.

"You should take Jirad. I'll leave Fei with you to lead the way. Meanwhile, I'll be heading down south to the Silent Forest (Sheng)."

After the Goblin King and Shure decided on the forces they would bring, they concluded the meeting.

"By the way, the item you requested from the koro dwarf seems to have been completed. Shunaria said she'd bring it here. The smith, Dumbre Dadee David, was apparently quite delighted with the result. He mentioned it's been a while since he last stuck his hand in a bloody transaction."

The frowning Goblin King was relieved upon hearing that.

He innocently exclaimed. "Oh! It's done?"

Shure smiled at that. "It'll get here by the time you finish with Jirad. Look forward to it."

"A weapon you can be accustomed to is a precious treasure in battle. I'm glad it's done."

Shure decided to offer a toast to the Goblin King.

Pouring pure-water wine on their cups, he said. "Once we've accomplished our objectives, let's meet up at Sheng. I pray that the fortunes of war grace you."

"Hmm... I don't like praying to gods, but... Fortune to you, Shure Forni."

After toasting their blue-silver-steel glasses, the two went their own ways.



The entrance to the Whispering Forest (Jirad), which was ruled by Nash Jirad,

was firmly shut.

Normally, we goblins wouldn't be able to force our way through, but the elves' barrier had been disabled.

This must be the work of Shure's sympathizers.

The entrance was as quiet as death, almost as if a war had just taken place.

The silence was deafening. Was the forest trying to strangle us with silence?

"Now then, what to do?"

I had over 100 soldiers with me. Most of them were goblins, but there were also 30 archers who've sworn themselves to Shure. Shure's adjutant, Fei, was responsible for leading them.

Among the goblins, the shaman, Gi Za Zakuend, and the Ferocious Arm, Gi Ba, were leading. The tribal goblins Ru Rou of Ganra, Dashka of Gaidga, and Hal Paradua were with Shure. I left the three of them to the wide-eyed Gi Jii. This can be considered a trial for the wide-eyed goblin. Hopefully, he'll be able to meet my expectations.

The human, Shumea, and the elf, Selena, were with me. Shumea didn't have a good relationship with the elves and the goblins, so she preferred to stay by my side. The fact that she merely doesn't have a good relationship with them, however, is a testament to her high adaptability and sociability as a person.

Selena was clinging to Shumea as usual; she readied her bow while hiding behind her.

"Shall we attack at once? It seems they have yet to recover from the sabotage of our sympathizers," Fei suggested, at which I nodded while looking around me.

Suspicious.

It's quiet, yes, but it reeks.

I looked up the sky through the gap between the trees. The vast blue sky was alone with its clouds. Not a bird was flying through it.

"Fei, do the sylphs have a spell to conceal one's self?" I asked.

Gi Za's ears perked up the moment he heard the word 'magic'.

"There is, I suppose..." Fei said, then he glanced around him and ordered one of his subordinates.

He seems to have picked up on what I was implying. As expected of Shure's assistant.

"Boss, something doesn't feel right... I don't know how to put it, but something isn't right." Shumea put on her helmet as she covered Selena.

I agree, but if we don't go, nothing will happen.

"Gi Ba take three goblins with you and accompany the scout elves. Gi Za, watch the left flank. I'll watch the right, while Fei watches the back."

From overhead our formation looked like a long spindle.

We proceeded warily. As we entered into the Whispering Forest, the scenery changed.

"Your Highness, up ahead!" Gi Ba yelled, prompting me to look toward the front.

Through the gaps of the thick trees could be seen the figures of demihumans that could almost be mistaken for ghosts. They were members of the Fang Tribe, werewolves. On their bodies were countless scars, and on their face was a grim expression. From that and the sword in their hands, I could tell, they were our enemies.

"A demihuman?" Fei muttered in surprise.

"Prepare for battle! Don't let your guard down!" I ordered.

"Lord Fei, from the back!" An elf said loudly, almost screaming.

Behind me and Fei were minotaurs. Their bodies were also covered with scars, while their expressions were so grim they seemed hollow. Regardless, however, they masterfully handled the great axe they wielded. They could not be taken lightly.

"OOOooOOO!" The enemies bellowed out a roar, almost howling, and then the werewolves and minotaurs attacked. There were about 50 werewolves

coming from the front, while 40 minotaurs kept us from retreating.

What are they thinking?

“Spears, forward! Stop their charge!” I commanded.

As the spears moved forward into the frontlines, I unsheathed my sword and turned around to meet the minotaurs.

“Fei, tighten your watch. Use all the elves if you must!”

Up ahead, Gi Ba and his three goblin subordinates fought equally with the demihumans.

“Gi Za support the front. I’ll leave it to you if they manage to break through,” I said.

“Got it. You can leave it to me!” He said.

Gi Za happily ordered his druids to begin chanting. “Focus fire on the werewolves trying to surround Gi Do from the right!”

Under Gi Za, the druids fought as one and supported the goblins at the front, allowing them to create new opportunities to turn the battle around.

“Onwards!” The ferocious Gi Ba commanded, prompting his three goblins to swing their swords one after another.

One goblin would block a werewolf’s attack, while the other two goblins would swing their swords; at the same time, in another part, the spears would line up and skewer the werewolves.

Gradually, the battle at the front swung to our favor, but the enemy wouldn’t let us have our way so easily, and from the heavens suddenly fell a rain of arrows.

“Close in on the enemy!”

If we near the demihumans, the enemy will have no choice but to stop their attack.

“Gi!?”

But contrary to expectations, the enemy shot goblins and demihumans altogether.

That's not good.

We'll be at a disadvantage if the druids can't offer their support.

"Boss, this is really bad!" Shumea dodged the great axe of a minotaur, then thrust her spear toward its legs. The minotaur cried out in pain, but it kept on charging, forcing Shumea to tumble on the ground to dodge.

Wind

Shield

"Wind of Heaven's Blessing!" Several elves chanted from behind.

At that, a wind blew up from the elves at the center of the horde, covering the sky.

A cyclone could be seen raging up above in the sky, deflecting the descending arrows.

"Goblin King, your decision is correct. Let's attack," Fei said.

From the trees to the sides could be seen hostile elves. The demihumans changed their formation to protect them.

"...That magic just now. How many times can you use it?" I asked Fei while battling the minotaurs.

"It depends on the enemy's attack, but... 5 times," Fei said.

A short while later the raging tempest up above dispersed, leaving nothing behind as it vanished into nothingness. The scope and power is big, but it only lasts for an instant. Moreover, it requires several practitioners to be cast, and if we don't use it wisely, we'll only end up crippling ourselves.

"We'll just have to break through these guys before they can attack again then!" Jumping over the sounds of metal clanging, I cut down a minotaur with my sword.

As I pulled out my sword, I repelled the great axe that came at me from my flanks.

"GURUUuoOOOA!" I roared as I slammed my fist into a minotaur, sending it flying away, while I ran onwards.

Minotaurs blocked my way, but I repelled their attacks with my longsword and counterattacked with my own.

“Your Highness, from above!” Someone cried from behind.

Shield

“Let my body be inviolable.!”

Immediately, I invoked Shield, but the raining arrows pierced through the black flames and entered my flesh.

Windea

“My heart rides with the wind.!”

The air shook, and in the next instant, eight small cyclones sprouted around me, blowing the minotaurs away and deflecting the descending arrows.

“Be careful, Your Highness!” Gi Za shouted.

I haven’t let my guard down, actually, but thanks for the support. It seems Gi Za and his druid have fully suppressed the front.

With Gi Za’s support I broke through the minotaurs and approached the enemy elves.

“Lowly monster!” The elf with the best armor stepped out.

Is this the leader?

My sword clad in black flames clashed with the enemy’s. Each time our blades met, the black flames seemed to be repelled.

Is that also an effect of Orichalcum or Srilana?

I still had the upper hand despite that because of my strength, but if I didn’t settle the battle soon, I would eventually have no weapon left. The enemy just kept blocking my attacks, gradually wearing my sword down.

Still, the enemy was no slouch, and while I continued to attack, he managed to keep on blocking while keeping himself from incurring any fatal wounds.

He is the enemy commander. Of course, he’d have some skills. Normally, they would be seized with fear and attack impatiently in their panic.

Be that as it may...

We can’t keep doing this forever!

I can’t leave, though. The elves specialize in long-ranged fighting. I have to keep our fight close.

“Nu.” Brushing away the enemy’s sword, I leapt right into the enemy’s chest. At point-blank, even if the enemy managed to hit me with his sword, it wouldn’t be a fatal hit.

As I seized the enemy with my hand, he tried to swing his weapon.

Unfortunately for him, his sword’s course would end up too far. He wouldn’t be able to cut me apart.

“GU!?”

But contrary my expectations, the enemy’s sword buried into me with a weight greater than I could have possibly imagined, causing my knees to quiver at the great pain. For a moment, I stopped.

“GURUuuuOOaAoOA!” Roaring, I pushed myself forward.

A clever man would back off here, but the enemy elf seemed seized by fear, as he sought to swing his sword again.

Ignoring the pain, I filled my legs with strength.

Then as I closed in our distance, I seized his arms that were about to descend and crushed it.

The elf’s anguished cries fell on deaf ears as I took his weapon and turned to the other elves.

Now our weapons are equal.

With my sword pointed at them, the elves stepped back bit by bit.

“Get lost!”

I considered pursuing them, but when I saw the situation around, I changed my mind.

We were still dominating the army, but many of the goblins have been wounded.

The elves’ defensive magic wasn’t all-powerful; it couldn’t completely render the enemy’s long-range attack moot.

Considering the battles ahead, I couldn’t carelessly lose any of the goblins, as it was hard to get reinforcements.

I wish I had some veteran warriors with me.

I watched unmoving as the enemy ran away, then I turned around to finish off the enemy that were left behind.

—310 days until the battle with the humans.



Level has risen.

54 => 55

Chapter 129: Sylph Unification War IV

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	55
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

In the Whispering Forest the demihumans were no different from slaves. For the past 50 years, they lived their lives like livestock, rearing their children for the elves and undertaking hard labor for them.

With the Forest of Darkness ruled by the elves at the center, the various regions could be divided into 6. They are Forni, Jirad, Gastair, Sinfall, Symphoria, and Sheng. This division hasn’t changed since the time the demihumans were driven into the forest.

The sage’s council at the time decided to accept the demihumans and evenly distributed responsibility among the various elven villages..

In other words, the demihumans were divided among the various villages.

It left a bitter taste in my mouth when I heard the captured demihumans’ story.

The harpies were the ones who caught wind of our movement, while the werewolves and the minotaurs were made to fight in the frontlines.

“To think they would actually use our neighbors as slaves!” Fei spat in rage before I could even say anything.

The young yet skilled elf was enraged by what he was seeing, though his strong spirit kept that anger in check.

“They are a disgrace to the elves!” The other elves from Forni each worded out their disdain for Jirad’s elves.

That’s a good thing. At the very least, the elves from Forni are able to feel repugnance at seeing the demihumans enslaved, but what about the goblins?

Right now we are fighting together.

If we could maintain this relationship, they might eventually start treating us as their good neighbors. Of course, it’ll take time, but regardless, as long as enough time is given, we will eventually be able to change the perception of the elves toward the goblins.

“Now then, what to do? We can’t exactly take these prisoners with us,” I asked.

Fei and the other elves glared at the Whispering Forest (Jirad). “Let’s bind them for now. They’re powerless as long as there’s no one to lead them.”

The captured demihumans don’t seem to show any intentions of resisting. They seem as if they’ve completely resigned themselves to their fate.

“Sure dampens your mood seeing them, eh,” Shumea said as she took off her helmet, which covered her whole face.

I wryly smiled. “Being a former slave yourself, do they have anything left?”

“Well... I was a battle slave, so I wasn’t treated as poorly as them, but regardless, it’s hard to live when you don’t want to.”

Shumea herself seems to have lived a hard life.

“One day I’d like to hear your story... over wine, of course.”

“Heh~ If its liquor from you, Boss, I’ll drink as much as you want.”

Did I just stir up the hornet’s nest?

Well, whatever. I should be able to get some elven wine after this battle. It

probably won't be enough to give to the whole horde to drink, but it should be enough for a feast.

"The goblins are ready, Your Highness," Gi Za Zakuend said. He was responsible for burying the dead and reorganizing the goblins into new three-man-cell groups.

"Those who can still fight shall follow me to subjugate the Whispering Forest (Jirad)!" I declared, and the goblins cheered.

"Strike down the hammer of justice on the heathens who shamed our neighbors!" Fei declared, and the elves cheered.

With morale among the goblin-elf army at its peak, the Whispering Forest (Jirad) was quickly subjugated.

But immediately after, an unexpected report came.

Fei and I stiffened upon receiving it.

"Impossible."

It was a mystery who it was that said that word, but it clearly resounded throughout the residence of Jirad Nash, the chief of the Whispering Forest (Jirad).

Shure Forni had been defeated.

"What shall we do, Your Highness?" Gi Za asked with a sharp gaze.

I felt shame at my stupefaction when I heard his voice, but I knew it wouldn't do to dally. We had no time. We had to decide our next move quickly.

"Is Shure safe? What of his army?"

But we didn't have any details. What about Gi Jii's horde? The other tribal goblins?

"We'll dispatch the army. Fei, pick someone to handle this village!"

"Ah! Y-Yes!" Fei responded though still flustered.

I turned to the goblins. "We're sending out reinforcements. Gi Za and Gi Ba take 50 goblins with you and look for the others. As for the rest of you, you will be staying with me in this village."

When I asked Gi Za with my eyes whether he could do it, he met my gaze with a nod full of confidence.

“Your Highness, I have just one question: How much time will you give me?” Gi Za asked.

We’re sending half of our army, so we won’t be able to continue our invasion of the elves in the meantime.

But the time we have actually depends on Shure’s life.

“Four days. If you can’t find them within that time, come back.”

“As you will.”

The goblin reinforcements left the Whispering Forest (Jirad).



“Can we really win?” Felbi asked, dubious.

“Of course, so make sure you act strong,” Pale encouraged.

“R-Right...”

When they got word that Shure Forni’s army was approaching, the Sheng-Symphoria army led by Felbi fell into panic.

The enemy was coming off the momentum of subjugating the Silent Forest (Sinfall); not to mention, they even had the ferocious goblins with them. It would be stranger if they were actually able to keep calm.

The only one who was calm in the camp was the battle-hardened Pale.

“Silence!”

She silenced the panicking elves in the meeting before the war, and then proposed a formation for the heavy infantry. The abundant equipment made of Srilana that the Forest of the Lost (Sheng) had stored were used to create a new squad of swordsmen.

“We can’t win against Forni with their high morale in a battle with bows. All the more so when they have goblins with them. But that doesn’t mean that they have no weakness.”

It was only a given that these elves, who knew nothing of war, would take the advice of Pale, who in her time as a member of Elks came to be renowned as the Silent Moon.

The Forni-Goblin Army's weakness was their alliance itself. There was no way their relationship would actually be perfectly equal. It would be a different story if there were a powerful leader leading them, but without a clear understanding of who was to lead, the more powerful the enemy they faced, the more disadvantaged they would be.

"We'll focus our attack on the goblins. Once their formation breaks, we'll send in the swordsmen and break the Forni-Goblin Army."

When the elves heard her calm words, they looked at each other.

They were doubtful whether things would truly go so smoothly. Their gazes eventually fell on Felbi, who was the actual leader of their army.

"Let's do it! We don't have any other plans. If we lose this battle, there won't be anyone left to stop Forni. We are warriors! Let us defend our home!"

Felbi's words spurred the elven warriors, and the Sheng-Forni Army began preparations to carry out Pale's plans.

Shure did not know yet that Symphoria's army had already arrived at Sheng. When they got to the entrance of the Forest of the Lost (Sheng), they found it odd that the gate was open, but thinking that their sympathizers were still in good health, they entered.

Shure was indeed careless. The fatigue from the ceaseless battles the past few days, coupled with the mental fatigue incurred from worrying over his sympathizers, then to top it all off, the tugging desire and hope within him to save his sympathizers all added up together to cloud his vision.

The moment they entered into the Forest of the Lost (Sheng), a giant tree sprouted up and blocked their way.

"Not good! It's a trap! Retreat!" Shure commanded.

Shure's quick response was praiseworthy. If they had stopped there, their casualties would only pile up until they were destroyed, so the best response

was indeed to retreat and reorganize themselves. Unfortunately, Pale had taken the promptness of his response into consideration.

“What!? But The enemy is right in front of us!”

The ferocious Dashka of Gaidga’s horde was the first of the goblins to be attacked.

By charging into the goblins with her soldiers and attacking them from long range, Pale managed to quickly separate the goblins from the elves.

Forni was retreating, but unfortunately, the commands he had given weren’t perfect, worsened by the fact that the goblins without their king was difficult to lead. Shure and his elves retreated, while the goblins found it hard to let the enemy in front of them run. Because of this the Forni-Goblin Army suffered much casualties.

The battle began and ended exactly as Pale had orchestrated.

Pale pursued the fleeing Shure Forni, but stopped after two days.

When she came back to the village, the elven warriors showered her with praise.

This was a precious victory picked up after a series of defeat.

To the elves, Pale’s existence was no different from that of a Goddess of Victory.

“Blessing of the forest and the wind to Pale Symphoria!”

The Forest of the Lost (Sheng) celebrated their victory.



“Lord Shure Forni has returned!”

It was like a huge rock had been lifted from my back when the messenger announced those words.

Shure, who had departed to lead the elves into the Forest of the Lost (Sheng), and Gi Za Zakuend, who led the goblin reinforcements in search of them arrived at the Whispering Forest (Jirad).

“At least you returned safely,” I said.

“Forgive me. I needlessly lost the soldiers you lent me,” Shure said.

It seems it won't be necessary to cheer him up. The elves lost 40 men, while the goblins lost 20. Apparently, it was because of Shure that the goblins lost so little. The goblins hesitated to retreat, but he refused to take no for an answer, and eventually managed to persuade them.

There were countless wounds on Shure's slender body because he personally defended the rear. They had been treated only with some emergency measures, as some of them could be seen to be still bleeding. The bandages wrapped on his head and his arm were all oozing with red.

Gi Za and his horde fought back the pursuing elves, but it was not enough to wash away this defeat.

We have to acknowledge the fact that we have indeed lost.

Now, what to do?

“You are still alive and we have lost only one battle. It's a bit too early to be giving up,” I said to Shure.

“Of course. We can't give up now after getting this far,” Shure agreed.

That being said, though, it is a bit troubling now that the Forest of Lost (Sheng) has managed to recover itself from its chaos.

“Was there such a skilled commander at Sheng?” I inquired.

“No, though I only saw the enemy for an instant, that was definitely a Symphorian soldier,” Shure said.

In other words, the two forests of the south have managed to recover. Moreover, Symphoria was even able to send some soldiers to Sheng. Exactly how are we to break the alliance between these two villages?

I don't want to take too much time, but...

“Symphoria's soldiers are excellent then, I take it,” I said.

“The commanding officers are certainly skilled individually, but...” Shure replied.

It seems he can't think of any commander who could pull off that trick in their

last battle.

“About that...” Gi Za said as he entered into the room with a male elf in chains.

“We might be able to find something out from this prisoner,” Gi Za said as he kicked the elf, causing him to twist in pain. Gi Za looked just like a cruel official.

I turned to Shure for confirmation, and he reluctantly nodded. I’d originally hoped things wouldn’t reach this point, which is why I agreed to the two-pronged attack.

“Who is your commander? If you answer you won’t suffer,” I said.

“You think I would give in to a goblin!?” The elf spat.

Stubbornness usually came with pain. That was even truer for prisoners.

“Just don’t kill him,” I said before turning heel.

“Of course,” Gi Za said before happily withdrawing with the slave in tow.

“Shure, rest for a bit. Recovering your strength is also your duty,” I said.

“...My apologies, Goblin King,” he said.

After asking him to rest, I called his adjutant, Fei.

“Let us keep an eye out for the enemy. Can I ask you to organize the goblins and the elves’ formation?” I asked.

“Of course,” Fei replied.

In the blink of an eye, Fei came up with a formation for the goblins and the elves. When it comes to these things, they truly are far and beyond the goblins.

Now, what to do about the next battles?

We couldn’t occupy Sheng, but we did manage to successfully occupy Jirad. With this over half of the elves have fallen into our grasp.

But that also meant that we had a lot more points to protect.

Sheng was close to both Jirad and Sinfall. It wouldn’t be a problem if they attack Jirad, but if they attack Sinfall now, it would be problematic.

“We have to attack, don’t we?”

The only way to keep the enemy from attacking is for us to attack ourselves.
We'll have to attack as soon as Shure recovers.
We have no other choice.



In an hour when the black of the night was yet deep, a squad quietly moving deep into the forest.

They had been discreetly taking care not to make any sound, even using magic constantly around them to avoid rousing anyone's alert. To hunters like them, this was par for the course, but they had even sent out scouts nearby to ensure that nothing would go wrong.

At the center of that moving group was Pale Symphoria.

"I can see them," an elf said from above, prompting Pale to look ahead.

Before them was a small squad of elves carrying goods. They were most likely Forni's transport squad.

"We'll burn the goods and capture as many of them as possible. Let's begin."

Paying careful heed even to the sound of the bow drawing, the elves under Pale carried out their attack.

The next day, the Goblin King and Shure received word of this attack.

The supply line between Forni and Jirad had been destroyed, and Shure's Daughter, Shunaria, who was with them, had gone missing.

—307 days until the war with the humans.



Gi Za's level has risen.

45 => 51

Chapter 130: Sylph Unification War V

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	55
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

When we got word that the supply line was destroyed and that Shunaria had gone missing, we immediately dispatched the army. Shure, though pale-faced, led the elves and about 50 goblins to look for surviving people from the supply line, while I led the remaining 300 soldiers to march to Sheng.

If we didn’t set out immediately we could risk another supply line. That wouldn’t do.

“Fei, I’ll leave the elves to you. Keep watch and attack from a distance.”

“Alright.”

The surviving Gaidga goblins and Gi goblins formed the vanguard. We needed to attract the enemy’s attention, so it was necessary for us to move gaudily.

We met the enemy halfway the path from Jirad to Sheng.

“Enemy spotted! There’s about 150 of them! They’re about 4 kilometers away!” A scout reported.

I immediately came up with a plan.

“Take out your spears and shields! We’re assaulting the enemy!” I commanded, prompting Gi Jii to order the rest of the hordes.

We gradually increased our pace as we neared the enemy. Leading the vanguard was the enthusiastic Dashka of Gaidga, who wished to wash away the shame of defeat in his last battle, while the riders of Paradua rode at the flanks.

When the enemy came to view, they numbered 150 just as the scout had reported. They seemed somewhat frightened at seeing us. It seems they hadn’t finished their preparations just yet. I unsheathed my sword.

“Go!!” I commanded, and Dashka bolted off, leading the charge into the opposing elven army.

Gaidga’s brutish strength wasn’t enough to tear through the enemies’ armor. The most they could was to send the enemy elves flying with their clubs.

The enemy was donned in full armor and wielded long swords. A troublesome foe.

We were currently on the offense, but there was no telling how long that would last. Most of my force was made up of normal gobs. Letting Dashka continue fighting seemed to be the best course of action considering our stamina, but if they ran out of steam, we would still end up as sitting ducks.

“Gi Za Zakuend!” I called.

“Leave it to me, Your Highness. The enemy’s frontlines shall crumble before our magic,” Gi Za said.

“Go!”

Gi Za took his druid horde and turned to the frontline.

“Fire!” Gi Za commanded, and a volley of magic rained upon the enemy elves.

“Nu...”

But a part of the enemy forces managed to repel even that magic. Are they using srilana or orichalcum? Either way, it’s troublesome.

We have the advantage in numbers, so as long as we’re able to get a good

surround, we should be able to win.

“Ru Rou, Fei, take down their eyes. Ru Rou follow Fei’s commands and strike at the enemy forces’ rear guard!” I commanded.

“As you will!” Ru Rou replied, kneeling.

“Understood,” Fei replied.

After Ru Rou took the Ganra horde and ran after Fei, I turned my eyes back to the frontlines. The middle guard led by Gi Jii was supporting the vanguard led by Dashka, while Gi Za’s druids supported them from the back.

Gi Jii has gotten used to leading. He quickly reinforced the frontline whenever a goblin fell. His timings were impeccable.

In that case, I might as well go out myself.

“10 squads! Follow!”

I entered into the fray with 10 three-man cell squads.



The enemy’s unexpectedly powerful attack caused Pale, who was leading from the back, to frown.

“The enemy is much stronger than expected.”

Even the heavy infantry leading the vanguard couldn’t overcome the goblins’ overwhelming charge. They had their hands full just defending.

More than that, the enemy goblins were strangely variegated, causing Pale to be shocked.

At the enemy’s vanguard were goblins bigger than the rest. They brutishly swung their clubs and pushed back Pale’s vanguard.

Behind them were smaller goblins with spears. Though ‘small’, these goblins were only smaller compared to the giant goblins at the front, and they were still much bigger compared to your usual goblin.

There were also goblins who rode on beasts who took a different path from the others and attacked Pale’s vanguard, and then there were goblins from the back of the enemy forces who persistently casted magic to support the enemy

vanguard.

To make things worse, Pale's archers were being suppressed by the endless volley of arrows shot by the enemy archers.

At this rate, their vanguard won't last even with the srilana armor.

No, the enemy should be nearing their limits. In that case, Pale could eventually dispatch the yet untouched light infantry in her middle guard. Once they're out, they should be able to damage the exhausted enemy forces.

If that doesn't work, she could send them out to take the enemy from behind, cutting their path of retreat off. Either way, victory should be theirs.

Still, though, the goblins were fighting unexpectedly well. So well, in fact, that Pale couldn't help but look on wide-eyed at the goblin forces.

To think the goblins were actually fighting in a formation. Not to mention, with persistence.

"They're strong, but... I can't lose."

If she were to lose here, she wouldn't be able to rescue Selena, as Shure Forni would surely destroy them.

To protect her comrades, she had to win.

"At my signal, send the middle guard in. They are to leave to the right and attack the enemy vanguard!"

Then Pale drew her bow and shot an arrow with unique feathers.

The light infantry behind their vanguard set out. It seemed like they were finally about to take the initiative and push hard into the enemy forces.

"GURUUuoooOAA!"

But just when Pale thought victory was in their hands, a world-shattering howl resounded throughout the battlefield.

When she turned her eyes to the foremost line, she saw a conspicuously giant black goblin jump out. In his hands were a long sword made out of orichalcum, and on his body were flames of black that acted like armor. Just the appearance of the goblin was enough to strike fear in the hearts of the elves and create a

crack at their front line.

“Tch! Follow!” Pale immediately drew her bow and shot two arrows, signaling the elven archers at the back. Until now they have been shooting at will, but with the two signals she sent out just now, they stopped shooting and followed her movements. Those two arrows meant “Scatter” and “Follow” respectively.

That goblin cracked open their vanguard. If they left that crack alone, it would gradually grow, until eventually, their vanguard fully collapsed. At that point, they will have no choice but to retreat.

“Aim at that goblin!”

The elven archers have been shooting to suppress the enemy all this time, but now, they focused their arrows on a single target. If that goblin was the spear that would break their frontlines, then they would break it and leave the enemy with no strength left to resist.

Pale ordered the hesitating middle guard as she drew an arrow herself and aimed at the black goblin.

Wind

Shot

“Winds, give me power!”

An arrow that filled her vision shot forth toward the Goblin King.



With the orichalcum long sword in hand, I cut down the enemy vanguard. Its durability fell faster compared to the other swords, but it's good.

I lopped off the arms of three more elves before I severed their upper-halves.

“Onwards!” I commanded.

If we keep this up, we can push the enemy dead!

“Your Highness!” Gi Za cried out, prompting me to look up.

I felt my back char as I looked up, then I inadvertently took a step back at the sight that greeted me. An arrow clad in wind was descending toward me.

I deflected it with the orichalcum long sword, but there were more arrows behind it.

“Tch... Let my body be inviolable!”

Not good! They’re using srilana for the arrowheads!

My ether scattered as soon as I invoked it. I tried to brush off the arrows as much as I could, but several still hit me.

When I glanced up again, for a moment, I saw an elven woman.

She’s probably the first archer to shoot!

I heard the sound of another arrow shooting forth from her direction.

Is she the commander!?

“Gu!?” I groaned.

“Save the king!” Gi Jii commanded, then the goblins gathered before me and formed a wall. As a result, they ended up being covered in arrows.

Damn it!

“Enough! You don’t have to defend me!” I said, but when I tried to step through the gaps between the normal gobs, I heard some normal gobs crying from the sides. The elves had started to push in from the right. Because of that the goblins had to split their attention between two fronts, causing the vanguard to gradually fall apart.

—This is bad.

I racked my head hard, thinking of a way to quickly turn the situation around.

Even if we keep up our attack, the enemy probably won’t break formation anytime soon. If anything, our side is the one that’s about to break because of that new enemy.

Should we split ourselves into two groups and fight both sides?

No, that would be stupid. We’re barely pushing back the enemy as it is now, if we split our forces, we’d be basically handing ourselves on a silver platter.

What about the other hordes?

I glanced at Gi Za and his druids. They have been casting magic all this time. That only worsened when a new enemy platoon emerged from the right. At this

rate, they'll run out of ether sooner or later.

I turned to Fei and Ru Rou's archers. They have been suppressing the enemy archers just as I have ordered. Thanks to their efforts, the enemy is unable to perfectly unify their attacks or move as they wish; the enemy is still somewhat able to attack together, though. How strange.

It's curious how they're able to do that, and I'd very much like to find out, but unfortunately, I don't have the time to spare.

"They're dispersing into the forest," I mumbled.

With that the suppression fire of the archers will have less effect.

No choice. We'll have to change the flow of battle here.

"Archers, focus fire on the emerging enemy! Stop their movements!" I commanded.

It would be foolish to start defending now after having come this far. If we did that, all that fatigue piled up after our ceaseless attacks might go to waste. We have no choice but to keep on attacking.

—Maintain the status quo at the frontlines while crushing the emerging army from the right!

Fortunately, the enemy emerging from the right are lightly armored. As long as we aim for the gaps in between, even the goblins will be able to handle them.

"Gi Jii, Dashka, Gi Za! I'll leave the front to you!"

After the goblins nodded, I took the goblins under my direct control and headed for the emerging enemy from the right. The goblins are still weak from the battle, but we can't rest yet. As we left our position, Gi Jii ordered new soldiers to fill in our now empty position.

Dashka bellowed out a roar and swung his club, then magic rained from above at Gi Za's call.

"Hal, gather your horde and attack the emerging enemy!" I commanded.

This isn't the time to be caring about some wounds. If this goes on, we're

going to lose.

We have our hands full just keeping up. the enemy has completely taken the initiative. Is there any room left for us to turn this around? Perhaps, if we're able to wipe out the new enemy platoon, while maintaining the status quo between the vanguards, maybe then...

If so, this will be a battle of time. Will Gi Za's horde run out of ether first, or will we destroy the right platoon first? If we can't break through, we're going to have to retreat.

—Damn it! Is this what I call a plan!? Fuck!

Though uncertain, I looked up ahead.



“They're still persisting!” Pale inadvertently said.

She was that surprised at the goblins' persistence. The black goblin managed to fix their crumbling vanguard, and suddenly, it felt like they were the ones being pushed. The middle guard that went out to attack the goblins from the right were no longer able to move as they pleased because of the black goblin and the enemy archers.

That black goblin would appear wherever the enemy's formation was about to break.

—He's dangerous.

Pale's instincts warned her of the threat that monster poised.

That black goblin hasn't shifted to an all out offense yet, so Pale's side hasn't suffered much losses, but the moment that thing began its attack, they would surely suffer.

“Cover the middle guard!”

There was no reason for the middle guard to push themselves. Their only objective was to attack the enemy's flank; half of their object had already been accomplished.

Pale was about to shoot another arrow to signal her scattered archers in the

forest, but a rain of arrows descended where she was.

Pale dodged the volley of arrows as she rolled on the ground, then she shot an arrow to the sky.

At her signal, her archers once again drew their bows and shot their arrows toward the black goblin.

Let this arrow end this battle!

Barrel

Shot

“Winds, give me your blessing!”

The amount of ether poured into this shot was twice as much as last time. That in and of itself was a testament to its destructive prowess, but if it meant killing off that goblin, then it was worth it.

“End this battle!”

An arrow shot from Pale’s bow, and a great number of arrows followed behind it.

For a moment, she thought she saw black flames suddenly rise.

Those black flames moved to clad the black goblin’s sword in its ember.

The Goblin King used its might to repel the descending arrows.

Then more arrows shot for Pale.

She was being targeted. The enemy had already figured out that she was the commander. Their attacks would only get fiercer from here on out.

Thinking that, Pale resolved herself, and then took out another arrow to signal her men, but then something happened that left her shocked.

The enemy elves and goblins were dispersing, while the black goblin turned to the frontlines. Their vanguard, however, was gradually moving back.

“Are they... retreating?”

They most likely intended to retreat like this with the black goblin protecting their rear guard.

But why?

No, the only thing that mattered was that the Goblin-Forni Army was

retreating.

Could they pursue them?

Their vanguard would chase the enemy’s rear guard, but then the enemy archers shot toward their archers who were scattered in the forest.

It was vexing, but the enemy thought this out well.

With this, they couldn’t carelessly pursue them.

“...But don’t think we’ll let you run so easily,” Pale said.

She had to strike when it was time to strike. The goblins’ rate of reproduction was just too frightening. If this battle continued, they would eventually have to strike down the goblins’ headquarters.

But first they had to pursue them. The fact that they’re retreating now meant that they’re thinking of the next battle.

Pale had to inflict as much damage as possible.

She shot an arrow to the sky.

It signaled: “The heavy infantry will lead the vanguard as we pursue the enemy.”

“Inform the detached force that we won, and are pursuing the wounded beasts now. We’re aiming for Jirad.”

A messenger was sent to the detached force led by Felbi.

—303 days until the battle with the humans.



Level has risen.

55 => 57



Chapter 131: Sylph Unification War VI

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	57
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

After comparing our forces with the unfaltering enemy elves, I felt it was about time to retreat. We could still keep fighting, but I couldn’t think of a way to secure victory.

If we kept this up, we would only be shooting ourselves in the foot. Replacing the fallen elves isn’t easy, and the goblins are too far from headquarters. We can’t lose here. If we lose here, the dream to conquer humanity will remain but a dream.

“Fei, Gi Ji, we’re retreating!” I commanded.

Fei nodded, while Gi Jii was shocked. Regardless, though, they both understood my intentions and promptly passed my orders.

“Fei, take Ru Rou and scatter into the forest! Gi Jii, have the hordes at the front retreat,” I gave orders while cutting down the enemy. “I will protect the back.”

The three-man-cell groups under me are exhausted, but we have to keep

fighting if we are to minimize our losses.

Swinging the orichalcum long sword, I clad it in ether. As the vanguard gradually retreated, the enemy's focus shifted toward me.

Arrows shot from the forest to cover me.

I don't know if this is Fei's or Ru Rou's, but either way, I'm grateful.

"Gi Za, cover me!"

"On it!"

Cyclones sprouted up around me, blowing away the plants nearby and stopping the heavy infantry approaching me.

We continued our retreat like this, but the enemy continued to pursue. Fortunately, the arrows shooting from the forest were able to slow them down.

"Now! Turn around and run!" I commanded to the goblin vanguard fighting behind me, then we ran toward Jirad.

We lost! Damn it!

The difference in equipment, the knowledge of terrain, the tactics used... There are a lot of things to think about, but right now we have to focus on retreating.

Stifling the sense of loss within me, I ran.



"...Is that?"

Fei had gone ahead to lead his platoon away when he noticed that several trees had been piled up, blocking their way. With the trees fastened together with vines, it would be no easy task to break this obstruction.

They were almost at Jirad, so who could have possibly laid out this obstruction? Then a cold chill struck him.

"Careful, men!" Fei commanded as he looked around him, searching for the enemy.

Only an enemy would do something like this. If so, then an enemy must be

waiting for them here.

The worst scenario flashed through Fei's mind. It was then that arrows rained from above.

"Wind of Heaven's Blessing!" Fei chanted, casting Wind Shield and deflecting the rain of arrows.

"So it really is an enemy! Have we been surrounded?"

The enemy that should have been pursuing them from behind was suddenly before them.

The more the sight before him bore itself onto his eyes, the harder it was to believe.

The forest surrounding the roads which they traversed was something that could slow down even the elves themselves. Overgrown with plants entangled with vines, it was a kind of place that would obstruct even one's vision.

Now that their path was blocked, they had no choice but to retreat.

They didn't have enough people to overcome the enemy ahead, and neither could they run into the forest, for doing so would be to abandon the goblins coming from behind.

Several elves appeared behind the trees that obstructed the road.

"Foolish citizens of Forni! To think you would actually join hands with the likes of goblins! You are a disgrace!" The enemy elf cried as arrows rained upon Fei and his men.

"Retreat, retreat!" Fei ordered as he glared at that wall of trees that towered over them.

Fei didn't know this, but the one who created this barricade was none other than the Pale's detached force led by Felbi. His job was exactly this, to go around the battlefield and seal the path of the Goblin-Forni Army, then they would wait for Pale's signal, at which they would then perform a pincer attack on the enemy.

"The enemy retreated," Felbi said as he watched Fei and his men retreat from atop a tree. "...Let's proceed according to plan. To Jirad!"



By the time Fei's shrieking report arrived, we had already shaken off the enemy pursuing from behind.

—The enemy is up ahead.

I had to make a decision the moment I received that report.

Should we try and fight with the enemy behind us once more, or should we try and break through the enemy up ahead? Either way, we're going to be hit from both sides.

If we fight against one side, the other side will come to crush our rear guard. That would be bad. If we go out of the road and into the forest, our mobility will be severely crippled; not to mention, we won't be able to move while carrying luggage. I also can't fight more than one front.

The Gaidga and the noble class goblins should also be almost out of steam.

"Fei, is there a path we could use to reach Sinfall from here?" I asked, trying to make myself as calm as possible.

"!?" For a moment, Fei was speechless. "...It's possible. It'll be a narrow path, but we'll probably make it if we go from here."

As Fei swallowed the bitter taste of defeat, I spoke. "Let's go to Sinfall, then. We can't take a pincer attack head on. We have to retreat for now and recover our forces."

"...I understand."

Seeing Fei run again, I couldn't help but sigh.

"This defeat cost us a lot."

Exhaling deeply, I stifled the impatience that tried to overwhelm me and gave an order. "To Sinfall!"

I ran at the back of the army as I prayed for Shure's safety in his search.



"I owe you one," Gi Ji Arsil said.

Bui wryly smiled and waved his hands when he heard Gi Ji say that. And to think he was so averse to them just some time ago.

“Don’t sweat it. It’s a given for us to help each other,” Bui said.

After failing to infiltrate the human fortress and getting wounded, Gi Ji Arsil was picked up and tended to in the orc village. He once tried to leave even though they were only trying to heal him.

The orc village was built around the land where the mother tree was rooted. The life the orcs lived here reminded Gi Ji Arsil of the time when they lived at the Gi Village.

“Will you be able to return to the goblin village?” Bui asked.

“That’s what I intend... I’ve done what I needed to, after all,” Gi Ji Arsil said.

“...Breaking the human fortress alone will be difficult, I believe,” Bui said.

Gi Ji folded his arms and nodded. Gi Ji had a lot of time to think while he was recuperating from his wounds. Those towering stone walls coupled with the length of the fortress itself. It would take a long time if he were to try and scout that whole thing by himself.

There were also those fields and those soldiers that were always patrolling. Trying to infiltrate by one’s self was indeed too dangerous.

The mission he received from Gi Ga Rax, to sound out the humans outside the forest, doesn’t seem feasible alone.

“I think we can work together,” Bui said.

“I can’t make that decision. At the very least, I need to ask Lord Gi Ga,” Gi Ji Arsil said.

When Gi Ji was wounded, it was the orcs who scouted the human fortress. Bui gathered the information they acquired and gave it to Gi Ji. When Gi Ji heard the details of Bui’s findings, he was shocked, and could not help but to change his view of the orcs. To think they were capable of gathering such detailed information.

“Please ask him then,” Bui said.

“I will,” Gi Ji Said.

This orc king was unlike the king. He wasn't fierce. He wasn't a king who led with power, but instead led with wisdom.

Of course, Gi Ji's faith in his king would never waver. It's just that he realized for the first time that there were kings like this too.

“Farewell, Orc King,” Gi Ji bid farewell and left.

Gi Ji felt he should teach the other goblins how to gather information as well.



“Lord Gi Ga, Lord Gi Ji has returned!” Yellow of Gordob happily reported to the knight class, Gi Ga Rax, who was tasked with protecting the fortress.

Yellow himself was also relieved to see Gi Ji safe and sound. After all, they had just recently sent a messenger to Ganra's champion, Ra Gilmi, to look for Gi Ji Arsil. Fortunately, he had returned safe and sound.

Gi Ga heaved a sigh of relief when he saw Gi Ji. “It is good to see you safe, Lord Gi Ji.”

“Sorry for worrying you,” Gi Ji bowed, then he told Gi Ga of his findings outside the forest.

Gi Ga rubbed his chin with his only hand. “We should at least gather the people from the tribes and talk this over.”

“If possible, then by all means,” Gi Ji said.

There was a human fortress right outside the forest, and one too big for them to easily subjugate. The wisdom of the tribal chiefs might prove invaluable.

As Gi Ga was thinking that, Gi Ji spoke.

“I have a request. Please give me some goblins,” Gi Ji said.

“What? Well, I don't mind, but...”

The noble class goblins were all bestowed with a right to have their own household, but most of them were sent away to expand the horde.

Gathering goblins from a land unknown to create a household. By doing so,

one truly became the head of a family, possessing a land that belongs only to one's self. This system is also known as the feudal system, wherein merit is rewarded with territory. Of course, the goblins didn't understand this. All they knew was that the king trusted them more.

Gi Ji's proposal, however, didn't involve a territory.

Moreover, the goblins received from the king were gifts, they were not supposed to be treated as soldiers.

"I wish to train them to gather intelligence. The way I am now, I am unable to serve the king."

Gi Ga was doubtful upon hearing that. Hasn't Gi Ji faithfully completed all his missions until now?

"From here on, we will be fighting against the humans. Alone, I am insufficient. I need more goblins in order to give the king satisfactory intel."

Finally, Gi Ga understood.

"I see, then in that case, how about the goblins that were recently born..." Gi Ga said when Yellow suddenly barged in.

"Lord Gi Ga! There are strangers knocking on our doors!" Yellow reported.

At that, Gi Ga took his spear and rode on his beloved steed outside.

"W-Who are these people!?"

Before them were a woman that was somewhere in between bird and human, a turtle-like man riding on a beast, and a bull wielding a giant axe.

"Name yourselves! These lands are ruled by our king! Aggression will not be forgiven!" Gi Ga proclaimed on blacktiger-back.

The bird-woman responded. "We are the descendants of the crystals, denizens of the west. We have come here as proof of our friendship with your king."

"...These are different from the ones I met, but these are demihumans," Gi Ji said from behind Gi Ga.

"Hmm... That would make you the king's guests, then? In that case,

welcome.”

As the demihumans reached the Fortress of the Abyss, the goblins and the demihumans gradually got to know each other bit by bit.

—300 days until the battle with the humans.



Gi Jii’s level has risen. 86 => 90

Gi Do’s level has risen. 71 => 81

Gi Za’s level has risen. 51 => 56

Gi Ji Arsil’s level has risen 7 => 14

Chapter 132: Sylph Unification War VII

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	57
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

“Welcome to Jirad,” Jirad Nash said with a clever expression.

He had gone missing during the battle against the goblins. As it turns out, he was actually hiding in the cellar. When Felbi freed Jirad, he came out with his escort demihumans.

“I can’t thank Symphoria enough for the trouble we’ve caused,” Priena, the chief of Sinfall who was chased out of his village, said as he walked up to stand beside Jirad.

“Indeed. Especially, Lord Fenit’s cousin, Lord Pale. I hear her achievements have been spectacular,” Jirad said.

“She defeated the Goblin-Forni Coalition. She should be coming soon, I believe.”

“What a promising individual.”

Felbi was happy to see Nash and Priena so elated.

This was a war to protect their brethren. At the start, they were outnumbered, but through Pale and the other warriors' effort, they managed to take back a territory. Just a little bit more and they would have half the territories back.

"We've prepared a feast. Come, let us celebrate this victory and give rest to the tired warriors," Jirad Nash said.

The warrior elves cheered at that. Felbi looked serious, but he was actually secretly happy.

The feast continued late into the night. When the elven warriors had all fallen asleep, Nash and Priena stood together with an evil smile on their face as they looked on at the sleeping warriors.

"What honest and nice children they are," Jirad said.

"Indeed. They are so nice they are even willing to fight for us. Cheering is the least we could do, don't you agree?"

Jirad had been freed, but Sinfall was yet occupied by the Goblin-Forni coalition. These two chiefs could not fight a war themselves, so they figured they would entice these warriors to fight for them instead.

In doing so, not only would they recover their territories, they would also create a rival for Fenit. The more Pale shone, the bigger of an eyesore she became to Fenit. Eventually, the two cousins would end up against each other. And once this war – which Forni started – ended, most of the elven powers will have been weakened, leaving Jirad and Sinfall ahead.

At this time, Pale was still in the dark of these two elves' scheme.



As soon as I got to Sinfall, I sent a platoon to contact Shure. Leading that platoon was the elf, Fei.

"Sorry, I know you haven't gotten any rest, and yet..." I said.

"For Lord Shure, I will go out anytime no matter how exhausted I may be," Fei said before turning heel and departing.

I see. He might look calm on the outside, but he's actually worried sick over

Shure.

We need to rescue them before they fall into a predicament. I hope they're safe. Once we've secured them, we will have to recover our forces. The Gaidga goblins were so tired they fell asleep as soon as we stopped; the normal goblins too.

"You called, Your Highness?" Gi Za Zakuend said.

I called him to talk about our plans.

"What's the situation?"

How many can fight? How many have withdrawn? How many have died?

"There are only 140 goblins left who can fight. The elves are less than a hundred."

In just one battle almost 100 soldiers were incapacitated. That's too much. Especially considering all the battles we have left.

Only about half can fight again, though given time, we will have about 260 soldiers again.

The enemy lost some soldiers too, but there's no telling their circumstances. For the meantime, we will have to stay on the defense.

—No, that won't do. If I did that, the enemy will just take the initiative again.

Stop. I shouldn't only be looking at the battlefield in front of me. I should look at the whole war.

I sighed at that realization and changed my perspective.

"...How about using small forces to engage in guerrilla warfare?" Gi Za suggested.

I nodded. That's one way. The roads here might be connected to the various forests, but the only path to Forni is through Sinfall.

"In one sense, it could be said the enemy helped us lessen the scope we need to cover," I said.

With this, a small force will be enough to defend. Not to mention, I'll also be able to let my goblins gain experience.

“A war will result in more casualties, however; how are we to supplement the fallen soldiers?” Gi Za pointed out.

“Do we have to contact Gi Ga after all?” I agreed.

Where there is war, there are casualties. It doesn't matter whether one is the victor or the defeated, that is an unchangeable truth for all parties involved.

The enemy we are facing now doesn't seem weak either.

What to do? It would take a considerable amount of time to go to and fro the Fortress of the Abyss. Will we have to fight with small groups until then? In the end, it comes down to whether we will be able to fight while minimizing our losses.

What about the elves? Will they be able to recover their numbers? I need to ask Shure once he returns.

Minimize our losses, improve our equipment, and ensure there is a path of retreat.

“Some equipment from the elves would be nice,” Gi Za said.

I nodded.

For now, let's do what we can.



The moment Jirad and Sheng's savior, Pale, entered the village with her men, an ardent welcome greeted them.

“To Commander Felbi and Pale Symphoria!”

Praise poured down on Felbi and Pale.

“Pale, you were marvelous!” Felbi said.

When Felbi appeared, he came with the various high-ranking elves from Sinfall along with the chieftains of Jirad and Sheng.

Felbi was all smiles as he received these high-ranking elves' praise, but Pale found this situation dangerous.

“Can we talk for a bit?” Pale asked Felbi.

The chieftains and all the bigwigs were all acting as if they had already won the war.

“Can’t we talk with them around?” Felbi asked.

“If you don’t mind, we’d like to join your discussion. Forni is a common enemy between us all. We may not be skilled, but we may be able to be of some help,” one of the high-ranked elves said.

“Right! There are people from Sheng, Jirad, and Sinfall here. We could—” Felbi said.

“...I would prefer we be alone,” Pale insisted, causing Felbi to shrug.

Pale and Felbi left the sea of people to a quiet corner where they could talk.

“Are you... angry?” Felbi asked.

“I am not. I just think it’s dangerous,” Pale said, inclining her head to hide her expression.

Felbi scratched his head, troubled. “You know, Pale. The chiefs aren’t so dangerous. They’re cooperative and they want to see Forni defeated too. They agreed to support us, and on top of that, they’re even allowing us to act as we please.”

“That’s true, but...”

Since they left the forests of Symphoria, they have been receiving support from Sheng. It was because of that that they were able to fight the Goblin-Forni army. To begin with, their arrows weren’t infinite, and neither were their weapons indestructible. The more they fought, the more their weapons would be expended.

If they could get Jirad’s support as well, they would be able to fight without worrying about supplies.

Food, weapons, armor, arrows, and perhaps even people.

If they could just get Jirad’s support, they would be able to act much more freely.

“Let me think about it,” Pale said.

“Alright,” Felbi nodded.

Pale left and walked alone to the bathhouse.

Every large elven village had a bathhouse; they were usually built near a lake of pure water. The elves had just come from a war, however, so there was no one in sight.

Pale took off her clothes, then submerged herself in the water of the bathhouse. The water reached up her shoulder as it sought to take away the stench of blood from her flesh.

There was a waterfall in the facility, wherein water showered down from an elevated area. Pale went there and prayed.

“God of Wind, Castor, and Goddess of Water, Iren, please guide your children. God of Forests, Chenzhen, please bless us with your divine protection,” Pale prayed.

She repeated those words three times, and then she cried for her brethren who died at her command.

Was she really in the right? She wasn’t sure. She could only washed herself to clear away her doubts.

My dear child, my dear child. A voice suddenly said, prompting Pale to doubt her ears.

“!?”

But then black winds whirled, and suddenly there was a black biting louse with a black feather in front of her.

...Why are you so sad, my dearest?”

From its stiff jaws came out a gentle voice.

“You are...”

I am that which watches over you.

At that, a soft wind wrapped around her, and then in the next moment, the faces of her dead brethren vanished from her mind.

“Uu, uu...” All the pent-up emotions Pale had been keeping came out as tears.

They slid down her cheeks and dripped down to the water to be washed away.

My dear child, the war will only become worse from here. Please don't die.

After the black biting louse said that it vanished.



A huge rock was lifted off my shoulders when I heard that Shure and Shunaria had returned safely.

“At least you’re safe,” I said.

“Lately, I’ve been causing you nothing but trouble,” Shure said.

His face was cheerful despite that; that was probably because of Shunaria.

The members of the transport squad retreated to all directions, so there were several people who managed to survive.

“Umm, Goblin King,” Shunaria timidly said as she approached me.

“It’s good that you’re safe,” I said.

“About the sword the smith entrusted to me...”

“Ahh, it’s fine. I’m just happy that you’re safe.”

“No, that’s not it... Actually, it’s here.”

Unexpected. Apparently, it was because Shunaria had it prioritized when they were attacked.

When the great sword came, I almost couldn’t believe my eyes. It actually took two people to carry it.

Flamberge

“It’s name is The Great Sword that Dances the Black Flames. It was made with alloy consisting of blue-silver steel (srilana), which has good affinity with magic power, and the steel of your old blade.”

I listened to her explanation as I took the sword and examined it.

The great sword stood as tall as me, one side shaped like a flame, the other shaped like a normal blade. There was a symbol of a flame carved on the black blade. She mentioned it was made out of blue-silver steel (srilana) and steel, that must be why there’s a silver color running through the center of the blade

until the tip.

The sword had been reborn, but it felt just like the old great sword (Iron Second) I used.

“Masterfully made,” I said.

It’s almost enough to make me fall in love.

I swung the sword several times outside to get a feel for it. The sound of wind being cut and the weight of the sword in my hands. Yes, this is indeed a trustworthy blade.

Enchant

“Turn me into a blade!”

Ether burst out of the blade that was shaped as if it were dancing. It was almost as if the ether was completing its shape. The ether drew the course of the blade as it flowed into it, and as a result, the sword seemed to go faster.

As I slashed overhead, the ether followed my sword down.

The power gathered behind the descended blade was greater than before. Just the pressure emanating from it was enough to send leaves flying.

The sword was so sharp it seemed as if a sweep would be enough to cut the heavens themselves.

I looked at the sword again.

Flamberge

“The Great Sword that Dances the Black Flames, huh.”

I got a good sword.

This war must be won.

As strength brimmed from within, I looked toward the south.



“Spears, advance!”

The spear platoon made out of goblins equipped with blue-silver steel stepped out. At the same time, the elven archers supported them with their arrows. We marched for Jirad, which had been reclaimed by the enemy.

The normal goblins lined their spears and struck simultaneously at the enemy soldiers in our path. The enemy soldiers held up their shields and blocked the goblins' attack head on. When the enemy saw that the attack was successfully blocked, they sent their soldiers to take our flanks.

The place we were battling at right now was one of the stopping points of the road connecting Sinfall and Jirad.

The battle was already spreading to the smaller villages.

There were many smaller villages around every big elven village. The main road connected to the big elven village was branched out to the smaller villages, forming something akin to a plaza.

The place we were fighting at was exactly that.

We specifically chose this place, as it's the only place that could allow our platoons enough leeway to let them train.

"Gaidga soldiers, slam those swordsmen approaching from the left!"

The Gaidga goblins swung their clubs and pushed back the enemy soldiers.

"Gi Jii! Stop the enemy platoon coming from the right!"

"As you command!"

A storm of arrows and magic descended on the right enemy platoon, forcing them to stop. That gave us just enough time to escape the enemy's surround.

It was then that I gave my next command.

"Spears, retreat!"

The first thing we need to do is to find a method that won't let us lose, then we'll fight and retreat sparingly. So long as we keep this up, the gap between us and the enemy will remain the same.

Moreover, while I am still leading the whole army, the platoons themselves are already being led by the young goblins like Gi Jii. Like this, they will gradually gather experience in the arts of war, and eventually, they will be able to lead an army by themselves. I have to patiently raise them up until that day.

The war has just begun.

—296 days until the war with the humans.

Chapter 133: Sylph Unification War VIII

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	57
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

I buried my sword into the ground and burned the scene in front of me into my eyes.

Right now, the elves were chasing after my goblin subordinates. Their swords buried into the retreating backs of the goblins, giving rise to many death throes.

—Not yet...

“My king! Please forgive me.” The wide-eyed Gi Jii knelt before me and bowed his head.

“Go,” I curtly said as I waved my hand to dismiss him, then I pulled out my great sword.

The Sword that Dances with the Black Flames, Flamberge.

I carried that sword that was as long as I was tall on my shoulder, then I turned to the counter attack platoon behind me and declared, “We are the warriors of the Demon Children of Chaos... Fear is cowardice! So howl!”

Goblins

In the next moment, a great battle cry bellowed out from the horde.

“Attack!” I ordered the goblins over that great cry, then I turned toward the approaching enemy and ran toward them.

The enemy was so numerous it was almost as if the land had been replaced by them. Exhaling a faint breath, as if to release all that pent-up vigor I had, I inclined my posture forward and glared at the enemy.

“GURUuOoOoAaA!” I howled.

The howl continued behind me.

I measured distance between our approaching armies with my eye, then I directed ether to flow into my great sword.

Enchant

“Turn me into a blade!”

As ether rose from the dancing-shaped blade of my great sword, I swung it.

The enemy was there to greet it, but the long sword he used to try receive my sword was cut alongside him.

After severing the enemy in two, I swept with my great sword to wipe away the flowing blood from its blade, then I bared my fangs once more.

This time the enemy welcomed me with their shields, so I sent flying away with them. Just a little, a crack had formed on the enemy’s formation.

Stepping forward, I swung my great sword overhead and swung it down on a clump of enemy soldiers.

As I wrecked havoc on the enemy soldiers, the sound of iron clashing with iron rang behind me.

The now pursuing goblins were fighting with the enemy elves.

They were equipped with blue-silver steel (srilana) equipment, but they were all actually just normal class. As a race, they were weaker than the Gaidga, slower than the Paradua, and were less dexterous than the Ganra, yet they desperately followed my back into the enemy platoon that had just destroyed Gi Jii’s forces and were counterattacking.

They lined up their spears and fought desperately while covering each other

and substituting the injured whenever needed.

The elves fought desperately too.

The place we were fighting at was one of those stopover villages between Sinfall and Sheng. This one in particular was closest to Sinfall.

It wasn't easy coming up with a plan that minimized losses against these clever elves, so I prioritized minimizing our losses and buying time over protecting the villages.

In order to raise goblin commanders, I have intentionally led this counterattack platoon myself and protected the other platoon as they retreated. To that end, I even chose to personally undertake the duty of stopping the enemy.

The enemy seems to have noticed my intentions, considering their attacks have become even fiercer.

—But...

I ground my teeth.

The corpses of my fellow warriors who I couldn't save filled my vision. We couldn't attack any earlier because of the plan. The reason this counterattack could become a success was because the enemy was properly lured. That's why we were able to stop them now. That's why we were able to execute this counterattack.

But while I might understand that in my head, I still couldn't stop the rage burning within me from rising.

I swung my great sword fearlessly and took down enemy after enemy.

Killing my subordinate is like taking away my limbs.

—You will pay!

“GURUuRUooOaAaAa!”

In my fury, I bellowed out The World Devouring Howl. Its great power suppressed everyone around me, but then arrows came shooting from afar.

—As usual, their response is fast. The enemy is serious too.

I swept with my great sword to fend off the enemy's concentrated attack, but I couldn't fend everything off. There were countless arrows clad in ether mixed in with the normal arrows.

Wind, water, fire, those varied arrows came pouring down on me endlessly. At the same time, I had to deflect the attacks of the enemy pouring in from the flanks, while I cut the enemy down.

There wasn't a second attack, however.

—This should be a good time.

"Retreat! To the right!" I pointed my great sword to the right and commanded.

I stood at the rearguard of the retreating goblins.

We all ran until we reached a narrow road, where arrows then shot from the sea of trees at our flanks.

These were of course Forni's archers.

Like that we successfully retreated to Sinfall.



The assassin, Gi Ji Arsil, left the Fortress of the Abyss and departed for the elven territory. According to the messenger that arrived a few days ago, the king was currently fighting a difficult battle with the elves.

"There sure are a lot of goblins. I thought the last horde was big. Who would've thought there'd still be so much left?" One of the eight flags of the demihumans, Mido of the werewolves, said while walking beside Gi Ji.

The fang tribe, the werewolves, were great warriors who possessed exceptional strength and speed. They ran the plains with their friends, the gray wolves, so it was fairly unsurprising that they were able to bring the king's message quickly.

But because they weren't very bright, they ended up quarreling with the goblins in front of the Fortress of the Abyss, causing much annoyance to the demihumans who came to fulfill their part of the cultural exchange.

Behind Gi Ji Arsil were 80 normal goblins from the knight class, Gi Ga Rax, and 50 volunteer warriors from the tribes.

“For the king, we will offer even our flesh and bones,” Gi Ji said, still glaring at the direction where the goblins and the elves were fighting.

Mido shrugged. “Well, we also have debt with our benefactors that need to be paid. I’d like to go in high spirits too, but...”

Rumors are said to move faster than the wind itself.

True to that saying, word of the matter regarding Jirad’s enslaved demihumans had already reached the demihumans outside the elven forests.

Gi Ji turned to the fiercely smiling Mido. “Descendant of the crystal, right? Have you also sworn fealty to the king?”

Mido broke out laughing. “Bwa ha ha ha! Like hell we’d swear fealty to some goblin.”

But almost immediately after he stopped laughing and turned to Gi Ji with an angry glare. “But I’m not without sense of duty. That goblin bastard raised a friend’s children, so... I have a duty to him. For that I will lend him my strength.”

Gi Ji nodded to the words of this demihuman chief who was also known as ‘Tyrant’. “...I know a man just like you. A goblin whom the king lauded a swordsman; a warrior who pointed his blade at the king.”

“Oh? Seems like someone I could get along with.”

“He was strong, so strong that he didn’t hesitate to wield his sword against the gray wolves for the sake of his brethren. But because he was so strong, he pointed his blade at the king.”

“What happened to him?”

Gi Ji shook his head, almost as if he was trying to shake away the image of that distant back, then he looked ahead of him again. “He went somewhere far away, but... I’m sure one day he will come back.”

Right now, Gi Ji couldn’t reach that goblin he admired.

“...We have to be strong,” Gi Ji said. “Other than us, the king doesn’t have

anyone to protect him.”

Gi Ji and Mido entered a village ruled by the Eight Flags and began preparations for the trip to the elven territory.



The coalition force led by Pale and Felbi already numbered 400 after receiving the support of Sheng and Jirad.

With manpower and the power of blue-silver steel equipment, the strength of their force was indeed something to be feared. That coupled with Pale’s strategies, which has survived the storms of the human world, and Felbi’s heroic leadership at the frontlines, they have already secured 10 victories all-in-all.

Though most of those were only from small skirmishes fought in the stopover villages between the large villages of Sheng and Sinfall, they still spoke of the greatness of the two leaders. Especially Pale, whose achievements were so dazzling it could only be said that she was blessed by the spirits themselves. Where she fought, the enemy would surely retreat.

Contrast Felbi who often stood at the frontlines with a smile on his face, earning him the title of the Forest God’s Favorite Child, Pale rarely smiled; yet that figure of hers as she led with the draw of her bow was extolled as the personification of the god of bows, Za Ruga.

Like this Pale became famous.

Being supported by her comrades in war and the chiefs of Sheng and Jirad should by no means be a bad thing. Unfortunately, the chiefs had another agenda. They hoped she would become Fenit’s rival; that’s why they supported her.

When Fenit Symphoria, the man who currently possessed the most power among the sylphs, saw Pale Symphoria basking in glory, he became furious.

After Sheng and Jirad recovered from Shure Forni’s trap, they had been supporting Fenit’s soldiers while sending soldiers to the other forests. It was actually because of them that Pale and Felbi were able to fight. Otherwise, Pale’s battles would have been much more difficult. Especially since Symphoria

hasn't actually been supporting Pale and Felbi.

The more the threat that was the Goblin-Elf Coalition subsided, the more Fenit was reminded of the threat that was Pale.

“As expected of the Symphoria,” Jirad Nash praised.

“Indeed, I’m sure Fenit is proud,” Priena added.

“...Of course,” Fenit bitterly agreed with a sneer.

Pale was supposed to have fallen into a predicament, but now? She had climbed her way out of the ditch and was shining brilliantly.

Fenit felt threatened.

“...It seems the goblins won’t be a threat anymore. I’ll be going home then,” Fenit said, turning heel despite the protests of Jirad Nash and Priena.

Fenit’s soldiers surely wouldn’t be happy to receive such a sudden order. An elf tried telling Fenit that as he left, but when Fenit saw who that elf was, his brows creased for an instant, then he sneered and walked away.

That female elf followed after him.

—276 days until the battle with the humans.



Level has risen.

57 => 59

Chapter 134: Sylph Unification War IX

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	59
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

“Your Highness!” Gi Ji Arsil cried out.

He had finally arrived after a long trip. At his call, the goblins, who were seeing me for the first time, raised their weapons toward the heavens..

It’s been 34 days since we lost to the elves at Jirad. After welcoming the reinforcements from the headquarters, we’ve finally began preparations to execute our counterattack.

The goblins numbered 240 all-in-all, while the elves numbered 150. The demihumans also brought 70 warriors to join in our battle.

“You sure? We’re not fighting against humans, though,” I said.

“Huh? I didn’t come here for you. I came here for the elves,” Mido said.

Nikea nodded. “I’ll be expecting much from you again, Goblin King.”

Nikea is as polite as ever, I see.

The goblins that came were all excellent. Of note was the noble, Gi Ji Arsil,

and the duke, Rashka of Gaidga.

“Looks like I can finally let loose,” Rashka excitedly said.

It seems watching the house has caused him a lot of stress.

The Eight Flags of the demihumans brought with them 40 warriors from the Fang Tribe plus 40 gray wolves, while the araneae brought 30 warriors along with Nikea.

“The formations are ready, Your Majesty,” Gi Jii said.

After all the battles we experienced, Gi Jii finally managed to evolve.

Status	
Name	Gi Jii Yubu
Race	Goblin
Level	1
Class	Noble
Possessed Skills	One Who has Walked through Death; Battle Demon; Versatile Master; Adjutant's Knowledge; Sword Mastery C+
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None

One Who has Walked through Death

Remains calm even while facing death. Resistance to confusion (MEDIUM).

Battle Demon

Bonus to leadership toward one’s horde and army.

Versatile Master

Can use any weapon up to C Rank.

Adjutant’s Knowledge

Due to fighting with the master’s horde, bonus to defense and critical rate (LOW).

There were also two normal goblins who became a rare class. A druid was also recently born.

Name	Gi Ah
Race	Goblin
Level	1
Class	Rare
Possessed Skills	One Who Encroaches into the Divine Region; Sword Mastery C-; Bloodsucker; Overpowering Howl
Divine Protection	Night God
Attributes	Darkness

One who Encroaches into the Divine Region

Can enter barriers. The success rate depends on the level of the barrier (LOW ~ MEDIUM).

Bloodsucker

Due to drinking the blood of elves and demihumans, abilities have been increased.

Status

Name	Gi li
Race	Goblin
Level	1
Class	Rare
Possessed Skills	Leadership D-; Sword Mastery C-; Explorer; Overpowering Howl
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None

Explorer

Mobility is increased.

Status

Name	Gi Uu
Race	Goblin
Level	1
Class	Druid
Possessed Skills	Leadership D-; Pursuer of Knowledge; Adjutant's Knowledge; Magic Manipulation; Water Bending
Divine	Water God (Iren)

Protection

Attributes Water

Pursuer of Knowledge

Due to the Goddess of Wisdom's blessing, intelligence growth has increased.

With this we have acquired both number and quality.

The iron equipment the goblins will be outfitted with are being transported from the demihuman villages by the new centaur chief, Tianos.

Blue-silver steel would be better, but it wasn't feasible to have the entire army outfitted with it. The yields are just too low and we don't have enough time. We have to make use of what we had.

"The advantage in number is undeniable," Shure said during the war meeting.

I nodded. We may have been pushed to Sinfall, but we aren't disadvantaged in any way.

"But the enemy is definitely strong. If I recall correctly, her name is Pale Symphoria," I said.

Shure nodded. "It's good we were able to make the prisoners talk. Who would've thought the enemy would be someone from the human territory."

Pale Symphoria, cousin to the current chief of Symphoria, Fenit. She has been working as an adventurer until recently.

"Pale?" Shumea, who was usually sleeping during the meeting, reacted to that name.

"What? Is she famous?" I asked.

Shumea shook her head. "No, she's not famous, but... I feel as if I've heard that name somewhere."

After a moment, Shumea suddenly stood up with a look of shock on her face.

"I remember!" she said. "That's the person Selena is looking for!"

Selena?

Oh, come to think of it, she did mention something about looking for someone, didn't she?

“Maybe we could have her try persuade that enemy commander then?” I said.

Shumea folded her hands and made a difficult face. “I hope you don’t take offense to this, but do you have the leisure to? You shouldn’t let your guard down just because you have more soldiers.”

Suddenly, it was as if she understood something, and she made a bitter face.

We did have more soldiers, but we didn’t have the territory to develop them.

Though even if we did have territory, the enemy would just invade it.

“what do you think would be the best course of action?” I asked Shumea.

“A war of attrition,” she bitterly said.

“Right,” I nodded. “We will forcibly make the enemy bleed make the most of our numerical advantage.”

We won’t lose. In the narrow woods, the ones who will come out victors will be us.

It will be a victory secured atop the piled corpses of friend and foe alike.

I turned to look at the faces of those who would be joining that bloody war.

Actually, there is another way to win, but it’s just too much of a gamble.

The losses will be great, but victory will certainly be within grasp. Something like this should pass for a plan, right?

“But won’t there be too much casualties?” The shaman, Gi Za Zakuend, asked.

I knit my brows. “Do you have a better plan?”

Gi Za groaned and another goblin spoke.

It was the recently evolved noble class, Gi Jii Yubu.

“Your Highness, how about luring the enemy into Sinfall?” He said.

“I considered it, but it’s too big of a gamble. If they occupy the village before us, it will be the same as handing them the village on a silver platter.”

To begin with, this isn’t our village.

The enemy knows more about it. They should also know where the defenses of the village are.

Suddenly, the doors opened and an old elf walked through and said, “then let me show you how to make that plan a certainty.”

Immediately, Shure stood up. “Shifon (Teacher)!”

“I am Falun Gastair. It’s a pleasure to meet everyone,” the old elf introduced himself.

That introduction was so perfect it was like something straight out of a movie.

“Did you overhear us?” Shure asked.

“It took awhile to bring my village under control. My apologies I wasn’t there when you needed me,” Falun said.

“Please don’t be, shifon.”

From their exchange, I was somehow able to figure out their relationship.

“Well, let’s leave the introductions at that,” Falun said.

Can he be trusted? I asked Shure with a gaze, and he nodded to indicate that it was alright.

“...And? What is this plan of yours?” I asked.

Falun answered in a quiet voice.



“I see... So the goblins have brought reinforcements.”

2 days after Gi Ji Arsil reached the king, Pale received a report from one of her scouts.

Sinfall was just a little further ahead.

The elven army with her now numbered 400. That included the forces of Sheng and Jirad.

The forces of Symphoria never came, however.

Between Pale and Felbi, Pale had a bigger voice in leading the army, but it was still much smaller compared to the nobles who were supporting this war. Sheng

and Jirad's voices were too big. The elven world was similar to the human world in that those with a certain blood flowing through their veins had a greater voice than those without.

"Master Pale, let us attack Sinfall here!" One of the soldiers from Sheng and Jirad said.

These elves have been winning so much that they started to believe they could win even without a plan. In fact, such talk became so common among these soldiers that their eyes eventually became blinded with pride.

"No, we should retreat temporarily here."

Sinfall was right before their eyes, yet Pale decided to retreat.

A commander might think courage would be necessary at a time like this, but Pale had her own thoughts.

When it came to strategy, the goblins were still below her level. Be it their intel, their timing in picking their fights, their concentration, or their schemes, they were still far below her.

Which is why she decided to use the stopover villages to pile up victory after victory.

The goblins they were fighting now was only the tip of the iceberg; more would yet come.

From her days as an adventurer, Pale knew that the goblins would never stop unless their headquarters was crushed or their master was killed. She did not know where the goblin's headquarters was, but even if she did know, she wouldn't be able to go past Forni without going through Sinfall, so she decided not to occupy the stopover villages.

There was no point in aiming for the goblin headquarters or any other targets. The only thing they needed to set their sights at was the master of the goblins, that black one.

"What are you saying, Master Pale!? We have finally taken the stopover villages from the enemy. Why would you give them back? Have we shed our brethren's blood in vain!?"

“Their sacrifice wasn’t in vain. We...”

These soldiers believed that the only reason the Goblin-Forni army lost was because of their internal issues. Hence, it was not because they were inferior to Pale that they only started winning now. Because of that kind of thinking, however, these soldiers from Sheng and Jirad have become quite obstinate in pushing their opinions.

Pale once used internal discord to deal Shure Forni a powerful blow, but now that she was on the receiving end, she didn’t know what to do. To begin with, this army was made up of many armies, so it was only a given that it would be trifling to ask to lead it.

“What we should be prioritizing now is—”

“—Reporting!” An elf suddenly yelled as he ran into the conference room with ragged breath. The three reports he brought greatly roused the people participating in the meeting.

The goblins and the elves have broken off with the demihumans, and Sinfall has been abandoned.

The moment Pale heard the report, a shock ran through her head almost as if a club had hit her.

“Fortune smiles at us! Let us take Sinfall at once—”

“You must not! It is a trap!”

Pale, who usually always kept her calm, suddenly spoke in a loud voice, causing the whole room to go silent.



“Pale is at... Symphoria?”

After the meeting, Selena cried to herself, as she pondered to herself what to do.

“What should I do?”

Her goal was to reunite with Pale. The king himself had promised her that. The elven chief, Shure Forni, had also promised her that. Shure and the Goblin

King both promised her that they would bring peace to the elves.

Everyone promised her, and yet...

“What should I do?”

If she just stretched out her hand, she would be able to reach Pale.

Selena’s heart shook.

Was it really alright for her to stay here?

Heat rushed up her head.

It was then that a pair of arms held her from behind.

“Uuu...”

Selena choked because of the sudden embrace.

“What are you moping around for?” A voice asked from behind her.

“Miss Shumea...” Selena said.

Shumea heaved a sigh at that damp voice as she held Selena tight.

“You were thinking bad things, weren’t you?”

“I wasn’t...”

“The goblin boss, me, that Shure guy... everyone here is your friend and are worried about you. You know, you really should treasure yourself first before thinking about your benefactor.”

Selena cast her eyes down and Shumea continued. “Listen to me, alright? It’s never good to think that it’s alright to sacrifice yourself for another person. If you’re going to use your head, use it to get the best results.”

“The best results...”

“Right. When I was a kid, someone once told me these words: “I’m going to aim for the happiest end, otherwise, there’s no meaning in life.”

Selena cried at Shumea’s warm words.

—264 days until the war with the humans.

Chapter 135: Sylph Unification War X

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	59
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

“You sure about this?” I asked.

“Yeah, do it,” Mido said with a fearless smile.

As all eyes gathered on me, I spoke in a loud voice. “This demihuman refuses to obey me! He dares spout an opinion different than mine! Such an act is equal to putting a hedge between us goblins and the elves. He may be a demihuman chief, but he will not be forgiven for this transgression!”

The fact that I was basically explaining everything made the whole thing seem like one big joke, but I had to, as it was necessary to make what was going on as easy to understand as possible.

“You call abandoning the elves and running with your tail in between your legs a strategy!?” Mido said.

“It seems you still fail to see the error in your ways!” I said as I made a gaudily

loud whipping sound with the whip in my hands.

“GUuNU!” Mido cried out in pain though he tried to stifle it.

I smiled. “Do you understand yet?”

“You think a weak attack like this...”

“Pin him down!” I ordered the goblins, then I proceeded to whip Mido.

Mido tried to argue, but I ignored his arguments and unjustly whipped him.

That was the show we put on, and we continued it for about 30 minutes.

“Hmph, if you understand, then from now on, you’ll do well to remember your place!”

A horrible performance if I say so myself, but it’s still better than not trying. I even concluded this joke of a play by unnaturally kicking Mido away.

“Into the gaols!” I said.

I went back to the old chief’s house, and after making sure there was no one around, sat and exhaled deeply.

“You seem exhausted,” Shunaria said.

I wryly smiled. “It’s still exhausting even if we’re just acting... Or rather, it’s precisely because we’re acting that it’s exhausting. Sigh... I don’t want to ever do this again.”

“Really? I thought goblins would be a bit more... Umm, forget it.”

“Cruel? Monsters who like to oppress others?”

“...Yes,” Shunaria embarrassedly admitted.

“You’re not wrong. We goblins are indeed bloodthirsty, cruel, and sadistic, but I’m... No, my subordinates are different,” I said. “We are warriors. War is a tool to make the world acknowledge us. We can’t be forbearing, no. Forbearance is a privilege of the victor. The defeated has no room for it or pity. Until now we were losers. People like that don’t have that privilege of forbearance, but that’s going to change from here on out.”

The black snake, Verid, who was coiled around my right arm and the will of

the twin-headed snake imbued in the gem on my left hand stirred.

“Yesterday’s winners will not necessarily be today’s winners. We might be 10,000 steps late, but we will still rise and challenge the humans who rule this world. To that end, we must become strong. In body, of course, but also in mind.”

Exhaling a faint breath, I thought of Pale Symphoria, the enemy who I have yet to meet.

“This time for sure, we will win. We will win and unite the sylphs. After that, I’m thinking of forming a bond of true friendship with your dad.”

“Do you truly intend to do those things?”

“But of course. I was born, after all, so I might as well aim for the peak.”

Perhaps it’s too hard for these elves who think the forest is everything.

“...I can’t understand,” Shunaria said. “But I do understand that you’re special. Whether it’s the demihumans or the goblins, I believe the reason they choose to follow is because of you.”

We have our will, yes, but that’s all we have.



“It’s been a while, I suppose. Still... the gall you have to actually show your face, Falun,” Fenit said angrily.

He was so angry that his face convulsed while he glared at the old man standing before him.

“Don’t be so cold. You know it’s really hard for an old man like me to stand around talking like this. Isn’t Lord Fenit, the great chief, a tolerant man toward people with profitable information?”

The pressure of this elder before him was enough to make Fenit’s anger subside a little, calming him down just enough to regain his mind.

“I have no need for flattery. I will be the one to decide whether your information is profitable or not. To declare the information you have so surely is just plain hubris,” Fenit said.

Falun softly laughed as he played with his white beard. "Then please decide for yourself, great chief."

Falun shared two intel: The schism between the demihumans and the goblins, and the withdrawal of the goblins and the elves from Sinfall.

The moment Fenit heard that he became both bewildered and on guard.

It was just too good a story. But after listening to Falun's silver tongue for a while, his unbelieving face turned to one of chuckling.

"It seems Shure, despite being renowned a hero for so long, has finally become unable to keep the leash on the goblins. Well, they are good-for-nothing brutes who only know to destroy," Falun said.

"How foolish. To control a beast, you need a whip. It seems he didn't know even that," Fenit agreed.

After considering for a while, Fenit decided to offer Falun a seat.

"Thank you," Falun said when he saw Fenit's actions, which could only mean that he saw value in the information he offered.

"So, only the demihumans are in Sinfall then?"

"Yes. The goblins have been incurring nothing but losses because of Lord Pale, after all."

Fenit turned away from Falun, glaring at the wall, then he turned back to Falun.

"Occupying Sinfall should... be a trifling task then?" Fenit asked slowly.

Falun nodded. "It's been said since time immemorial that a house always falls from within. One could understand this just by watching the humans; and now, it holds true for Forni. How regrettable..."

"Hmph, regrettable? There is no saving a fool chief who thought it wise to ally himself with the goblins, nor is there any for the fool people who chose to follow him. They are nothing but fools who've disgraced the pride of the elves. They must be defeated for the good of all elves," Fenit said passionately, slamming the table with his hand, then he stood up and called for someone.

“I will have you work, Elder Falun. You may not have long left, but you are still the chief of Gastair, one of the central players to the west!”

Fenit said in a loud voice to the man who entered the room. “We are going to war! Ready the soldiers! Let Forni know of Symphoria’s might!”



When Pale heard that Fenit Symphoria was leading his army into Sinfall, she hurriedly requested an audience with him.

Pale and the soldiers under her were originally from Symphoria. Sheng and Jirad’s soldiers might have been added to their numbers, but that didn’t mean they could just ignore the chief.

Pale couldn’t understand why Fenit was leading an attack on Sinfall. As far as she was concerned it was obviously a trap.

Unfortunately, Pale had one major weakness: she judged other people using herself as the standard. In other words, she could ‘see’ it was a trap; therefore, others must also see that it is a trap. So when Pale heard that Fenit was attacking, her eyes almost bulged out of their sockets, and she immediately sent a messenger to request a meeting with Fenit.

Falun Gastair had indeed surrendered, so they would be attacking Forni from both the west and the south, but... There was no reason for Fenit to attack himself.

He could just send Falun to attack Sinfall by himself. If he wasn’t willing to go that far, then he probably hadn’t truly surrendered.

Yet Fenit still chose to lead from the front with Falun. He even sent word to the villages, saying, “As chairman of the sage’s council, I ask you to gather under me.”

Regardless how little Fenit might have known about the art of war, he was still currently the most influential elf among the sylphs. The other villages would have no choice but to bow to his influence and send their soldiers. Fenit’s influence was so great that it could overshadow all of his shortcomings.

The whole Symphorian army were unknowingly walking to a cliff.

As pale scooped her reflection on the waters of the bathhouse, she washed her face.

“...If Sinfall is a trap, can we stop it? Can we break through it?”

Pale repeated those words several times to herself as the worst case scenario flashed through her mind several times.

She scooped out her reflection again.

My dearest child, Pale.

When Pale heard that voice, she looked up and saw a black-feathered biting louse floating.

There is a path to survival to the west. Please don't die...

“That's!”

Pale wanted to ask something, but before she could, the biting louse vanished. Her hands that had unknowingly reached for the sky fell powerlessly back down to the waters, giving rise to many waves.

“Master Pale Symphoria! Master Fenit has responded. He will meet you at Sheng.”

“Ah, alright.”

Pale calmed down after hearing that, and after dressing herself, left the bathhouse and hurried for Sheng.

“This is dangerous...”

The first thing she noticed when they arrived at Sheng was the overly relaxed atmosphere. Everyone did as they pleased. They ate when they wanted, spent their time on whatever they wanted, and no one even bothered to tend to their weapons.

“As expected of the great chief, even his soldiers are full of confidence,” Felbi said.

“Do you really believe that?” Pale asked with a sharp glare.

“Well... I can't see it any other way.”

“Forget it. Let’s just go see Fenit.”

Pale took Felbi, who was shrugging his shoulders, to meet Fenit.

When Pale saw Fenit, she blew up. It was almost as if her calm this morning was nothing more than a lie.

“Fenit! Please stop this mad march to Sinfall now!”

“You just got here! What are you saying all of the sudden!? This is my decision as chief. Stop saying things just because of your personal feelings!”

“I am not telling you to stop out of some petty prejudice! I am telling you to stop because this is a trap! If we enter Sinfall, Forni and the goblins will attack us!”

“Show me proof then! You may be my cousin, but surely you wouldn’t actually ask me to believe you just because you said so!”

Pale was so caught up in her emotions that she could no longer see her surroundings. She closed her eyes for a moment, then looked at Fenit once more.

“Think about it...” Pale said.

“Think about it? So in other words you don’t have any evidence that it’s a trap?” Fenit said, cutting her off.

“That’s...”

“Dear cousin, if you’d open your eyes you would see that the army is already moving. There are already 600 warriors under me. If we add your soldiers as well, we will have 1000. If we attack with that much, any village would surely fall.”

Under Fenit were 200 enslaved demihumans and 400 elven warriors.

“The problem is after the village falls...” Pale said.

“You don’t need to worry about that either. After the village falls, I will promptly attack Forni and quickly put an end to this meaningless war! I know you are unskilled at war and dislike it, so rest assured, dear cousin, that the war will end very soon.”

Indeed, if he could attack Forni immediately after Sinfall, he would be able to put a quick end to the war. Pale couldn't help but agree there.

But would an orderless army like this truly be able to do that? Pale couldn't answer that question.

"Is this all you came for? If so, then I'll be going. From here on, I will be giving your orders through Commander Felbi. I still have a meeting, good day!"

"Ah, Fenit!"

Fenit's escorts cut through between Pale and Fenit as they left.

"What now?" Felbi asked.

Pale bit her lips. "Let's do what we can."

At the very least, they should minimize the casualties.

"Well, that's about all that we can really do," Felbi said with a smile.



Hushing our breaths in the forest, we waited for night to come.

5 days ago, Symphoria's coalition army occupied Sinfall.

Since then, they haven't moved.

I checked which way the wind was blowing, then I turned behind me to ascertain that the goblins, the elves, and the demihumans were all ready.

The wind was blowing strongly from the south to the north.

"Let's go," I said.

That was all that needed to be said.

We moved through the forest, then as I raised Flamberge up, our attack on Sinfall began.

The Symphoria patrols were quietly taken out by Gi Ji Arsil and his band of scout elves.

The big villages among the elves were: Forni, Symphoria, Sheng, Gastair, Jirad, and Sinfall. The moment the war began, these villages quickly solidified their defenses.

They built a gate to block the road, created fences out of plants and thorny vines that grew quickly, placing them around the residential district, then they placed enough trees around to ensure that there wasn't even a tiny gap. In this way, they created something akin to castle walls.

The elves were children of the wind and water, who have received the protection of the forest, and were blessed with the ability to manipulate plants. This is something I only heard from Shure as the war progressed, but it was precisely because of this that we goblins could move through this sea of forest that seemed impossible for our kind.

The elves constructed their facilities by making the plants move. Bigger facilities were built by having hundreds of elves move giant trees. After which, they then adjust the branches and use the trees as living walls.

Of course, the ability to manipulate plants was different from person to person. Being able to do something better as a group was a given, but there were some individuals who possessed similar powers despite being alone. That sort of thing is a kind of trait of this world.

The living tree gate was shut tightly.

We only moved far enough that we could see it, then we hushed our breathing again.

"It's almost time..."

Soon the red moon of the older goddess, Ervi, will become a full moon, and the moon of the younger goddess, Navi, will become a half-moon. The winds of the moonlight goddess, Veedena, will lose its strength, and the darkness of the night god, Ya Jansu, will descend.

We waited for the signal.



Occupying Sinfall was so easy it was anticlimactic.

The only ones to surrender were the werewolves and the noncombatant elven citizens. Fenit was quite tolerant of them.

To the elves, who numbered 1000 men strong, victory was within grasp.

“I am Mido of the Fang Tribe. I thank you for accepting our surrender.”

Mido had to be carried out by his comrades because of the wounds he had incurred.

The ones to receive him were Felbi and Pale.

Mido ordered Pale to do this and that for him, and she wordlessly obeyed without a word of complaint.

Felbi wasn't happy, but he didn't voice out a word of complaint.

“Are those wounds from fighting?”

“No, unfortunately. I got it from that goblin bastard. I can't believe how foolish I am to have actually considered forming an alliance with him,” said Mido with his head bowed down.

His body was covered in whip marks all over from head to toe.

“How cruel...” Felbi said.

Pale nodded. “Please rest assured, we have no intentions of hurting you.”

“I'm grateful, but...” Mido frowned. “We have lived our lives as warriors. At least that was the case for us under the Forni. Yet it seems we are treated as slaves in your forests?”

“That's...”

Pale didn't know what to say, so Felbi answered in her place.

“They have their own way of living. I hear they became slaves in the past, but I don't know the details. If you're interested, you should ask them.”

Felbi patted Pale's shoulder, imploring her to go.

“Yes, in any case, we have to go now. Let's talk more tomorrow,” Pale said.

Mido quietly watched the two's back as they left.

The next day, Pale noticed that the demihumans who surrendered talked to the enslaved demihumans, but she couldn't spare any thoughts for them.

The only thing in her mind now was that they needed to attack Forni as soon as possible.

She needed to convince Fenit, but how? They still needed to do something about the Forni-Goblin Army's impending attack too.

On the fifth day after taking over Sinfall, an ominous feeling struck Pale, waking her up in the dead of the night. During this time, the wind blew fiercely, almost as if it were warning them.

"Why am I so rattled? Something doesn't feel right..."

Pale left her bedchamber with her short sword and bow.

"God of Wind, Castor, and Goddess of Water, Iren, please guide your children. God of Forests, Chenzhen, please bless us with your divine protection," Pale prayed.

Pale walked through the black of the night, patrolling the surrounding area.

The soldiers of Symphoria were all drunk. They must have been feasting today too. Pale couldn't help but sigh at their sorry appearance. In the end, she wasn't able to convince Fenit to attack Forni.

After securing victory so easily, the soldiers of Symphoria and the other villages completely looked down on the enemy. They started thinking they could win this war without any more sacrifices.

Pale walked toward her own platoon.

"Yo, what's up, Pale?"

Felbi was at the southern gate leading to Sheng, drinking by himself. When Pale saw that, she sighed.

"I couldn't sleep... I'm not so sure about drinking liquor in the dead of the night, though."

"Hmph, it's fine. There's no enemy here. There won't be any even if I get drunk. If you want we can exchange pointers in archery."

"I know you're used to drinking."

Realizing that there wouldn't be any end to arguing, Felbi frowned and turned to Pale. "What? Are you worrying about that again?"

"...Yeah."

“You’re such a worrywart. I like that about you, but... Huh? What is that?”

Felbi squinted his eyes at the distant fire, while Pale turned.

“The banquet should have already ended,” Felbi said.

“True, I wonder what that is? An accidental fire, perhaps? That direction is where the slave demihumans are,” Pale said.

The ominous feeling within Pale only grew stronger.

—256 days until the war with the humans.

Intermission: Ancient Hero

	Status
Name	Mido
Race	Werewolf
Level	95
Class	Warrior
Possessed Skills	The Right Hand of Tyranny
Divine Protection	Wind God
Attributes	Wind

Carad was a demihuman born a slave. His father and his mother were both slave demihumans, though their brown fur was greatly praised within the Fang Tribe.

Carad was born a slave and grew up a slave, just like his mother and father who lived a life of slavery and eventually died a slave.

“Our ancestors once ran freely through the vast plains.”

He still remembered the gentle voice of his mother.

“So why are we here? In a place like this?”

Life as a slave was horrible. They were forced to live in small rooms and were even forbidden from going out. They couldn’t even eat their fill.

One day, when the elven children made him cry, he asked his mother that question.

“...Well, once upon a time, we suddenly found ourselves in the middle of a war, then before we knew it, we ended up here.”

When Carad saw his mother’s lonely face, he couldn’t find it in him to ask any more.

But he knew that they were slaves without any rights, neither the right to live nor the right to die.

Eventually, his parents died, and some decades later, he suddenly found himself a part of a slave platoon headed to Sinfall.

“Yo, brother,” a voice called out to him.

“You again,” Carad said.

In front of Carad was a Fang Tribe youngster from another village.

“Don’t be so cold,” the youngster said.

“I don’t have any business with you,” Carad said.

“But I do. Brother, won’t you come with us? We’ll happily receive you.”

This man has been pestering him since yesterday, asking him to come to their village.

There they could hunt as they please, fight as they please, and raise a family as they pleased.

“...Retreat is death. Every slave knows that,” Carad said.

His nearby comrades who were like him all had resigned eyes. Slaves were usually killed whenever they ran to set an example.

“I don’t know what happened to you in the past, but this is an opportunity. In order to be like our ancestors we’re going to —Hey! Where are you going?”

“Sorry, but I want to work on my weapon. I want to increase my odds of surviving even a little.”

“Not like you can call your current life ‘living’.”

Carat angrily turned back to the young man. “Even so, I don’t want to die. That’s why we...”

The man frowned. “There’s still tomorrow. I hope you can give me a good answer then.”

“I’m telling you, I—”

“I’ll wait for you, brother.”

The youngster turned around and walked away. On his back could be seen countless wounds, some still fresh.

“He’s a slave too, isn’t he? Why is he so persistent?” Carat muttered.

When he came back to his comrades, he started working on his rusted iron equipment. The leather armor they had were desperately made by the women even though they might never come home. Their armor was far inferior compared to the blue-silver steel the elves wore.

Every day was just another struggle with death.

Despite that he wanted to meet his wife. Though few, he wanted to protect the people he loved. That was the one thing that kept Carad ‘alive’, and he didn’t have the courage to sever it.

“Hey, that guy just now...” A demihuman said.

Aside from doing maintenance on their equipment there wasn’t much to do. The whole Symphoria army had become relaxed since they conquered Sinfall, but the werewolves held their breath and waited in the sidelines for the next battle as they always did.

“He went back,” Carad said, though he seemed to be brooding.

“What? Did something happen?” The demihuman asked.

“I was just wondering... What is it like to be free?” Carad said.

—Freedom.

Carad tried not to think about it, but when there was nothing to do, he couldn’t help but think of it.

“You’ll be able to eat as much meat as you want, I guess?” A demihuman replied.

“Stupid, you think you can hunt with your skills?” Carad bantered.

They talked idly among themselves, but in the end, someone sighed and said, “It probably feels like the hero, Harid, did.”

The hero, Harid.

That was the name of the hero werewolf who stood against the humans when they were being chased through the plains. Carad always enjoyed hearing bedtime stories of his tales from his mother.

He dreamt of becoming like him one day.

He never stopped dreaming even when he was bullied by the elven children, but somewhere someday, he started thinking it was impossible for him to become that hero.

“The hero, Harid, huh?”

Since when did he...



The next day, that man came again. His proposition hadn't changed, but Carad suddenly thought of asking him something.

“Hey, do you know the story of the hero, Harid?” Carad asked.

“Hah? Well, yeah, I'm pretty sure,” the youngster demihuman replied.

As the story goes...

The Fang Tribe was living peacefully in the plains, but then the humans suddenly attacked.

Merchants they once traded with.

Hunters who helped them before.

Villages they'd never seen before.

All sorts of humans suddenly pointed their blades at them and hunted their kind. The werewolves had their hands full just running away.

In the end, they were driven to a corner, but just when they thought it was over, a hero appeared.

A young man by the name of Harid, who ran through the woods with his giant

gray wolf friends.

With the strength to tear through even armor of iron and a fur impervious even to fire, Harid led his tribe and fought against the humans for the sake of his brethren.

But Harid wasn't just brawns, he was smart too.

He had friends among the humans and knew their strength. He knew full well that if he fought them he would surely die.

Yet despite knowing that he fought against them.

After seven days and seven nights of fighting, Harid managed to drive the humans to the other side of the plains. He had successfully brought peace to the Fang Tribe, but the fierce battle left him critically wounded. In his last moments, he told his brethren to run to the forest, then he passed on to paradise.

There he lies, recovering from his wounds, and one day, when his brethren are in danger, he will rise from his sleep and save them.

After that the Fang Tribe ran to the forest and sought refuge from the elves.

"He sacrificed himself to save others. In the end, he was named a hero, to be praised for all time," Carat said to the youngster demihuman after telling Harid's story. "What do you think Harid would think if he saw us today?"

"...I'm sure not even he would believe that the elves could become so rotten."

Carad's eyes opened wide when he heard the demihuman's response. "Became rotten? But they were always like this."

The demihuman shook his head. "Where we live, they mostly leave us alone except for a visit once every few years."

"No way..."

Carad couldn't believe his ears. If this demihuman's words were to be believed, the elves weren't particularly bad, it was just the Jirad.

Carad drooped his ears, while the man before him narrowed his eyes. An odd seemingly apologetic atmosphere appeared between them.

What's going on? Carad wondered.

The demihuman didn't speak. He just quietly stood there.

"...Why did Harid fight, I wonder. Even though he knew he could die... Didn't he fear death?"

When Carad finally spoke, those were the words that came out.

"Who knows?" The demihuman said. "He was a chieftain, so he must've had a strong sense of duty. That's probably it."

Then as if he was talking about an old friend, Carad said, "It was as if—"

But then a voice yelled.

"Hey, what are you doing!?" An elf yelled, cutting their conversation short.

"Not good, I have to go!" Carad said.

But when he tried to go back, the youngster demihuman with him pulled his arm.

"Brother, come here this evening. Let's continue this talk."

"Now's not the time for—"

"Come! You must definitely come!"

Then the man turned, and he vanished like the wind.



Tonight would be the fifth night since they've occupied Sinfall.

Strong winds blew from the south to the north, making a groaning sound that shook one's ears.

During the night the slaves were chained and gathered in one spot. Carad's eyes darted to and fro, but he couldn't search for the man he met this afternoon.

The elves had been partying again, but now, it was so quiet only the winds made noise.

Carad's ears stood as he focused his hearing.

For some reason, he felt uneasy.

He kept thinking back to that man's expression.

Unfortunately, he couldn't move. If he were to move even a little, the chains attached to his neck would rustle.

From the start, he knew he wouldn't be able to meet him.

Carad closed his eyes and forced himself to sleep. It would be foolish to tire himself before the war began.

When sleep took him, he saw the hero, Harid.

Of course, he'd never actually seen the man before, but he had come up with his own image within his mind.

When he saw his face, he suddenly found himself unhappy.

"Why?"

In his dream, he struggled to speak, but when he finally managed to, what came out was a question.

"Why are we in a place like this?"

The hero fought the humans. That's praiseworthy. But in the end, his decision led to them being enslaved. He couldn't even use his life the way he wished.

—*"Not like you can call your current life 'living'."*

Whose words were those?

Right. It's not your fault that we're here.

But still... Why are you sleeping so peacefully?

If you're a hero, then save us!

"—, *HUFF."

Suddenly, Carad opened his eyes.

A bad dream, Carad thought.

A grim reminder for a dream; of course, it was bad.

It was cold. Apparently, his back had drawn cold sweat.

Then a voice called out to him.

“So this is where you were,” it said.

Still half asleep, Carad mistook the figure before him for the hero in his dreams, and the words it spoke were like a saving hand to him from the sorrow he felt in his dream.

Carad blinked his eyes a few times then looked up that figure.

—Alone, dressed in armor, and covered in blood... the hero stands before me.

“Ha...rid?”

After blinking a few times, it finally dawned on him that this was the man that spoke to him this afternoon.

“Oh... It’s you.”

Carad tried to talk as he usually did.

He thought he was hallucinating, but the smell of blood was real.

That ferociously exhaling breath coupled with that sharp gaze that reminded one he was a warrior.

“Are you hurt?” Carad asked as he stood up, causing the chains to rustle.

At that, the sleeping brethren around them began to wake.

“I came to pick you up, brother.”

His low-pitched voice resounded with the wind, making it hard to hear.

Carad saw a light from behind the demihuman. Was that a torch?

The other demihumans quietly watched Carad and this demihuman’s exchange as they woke.

Carad blinked his eyes again as the demihuman folded his arms and spoke in a loud voice. “The hero, Harid, fought the humans until the end of his life! After he fought for seven days and seven nights, he spent every last breath in his children’s arms guiding our kind!”

Carad, who had long stopped thinking, saw the figure of that great hero flash through his mind. The other members of the Fang Tribe were the same. As he

and his brethren started to get noisy, the man before them spoke again.

“The hero, Harid, said he couldn’t peacefully pass unless our tribe fulfilled one wish. He said that if our brothers were to fall later, it would be our responsibility!”

At the man’s words, emotions rose within Carad’s chest. Fearless Fang Tribe members carrying torches gathered around from behind the demihuman.

“Save them, he said! Only then would he be able to pass peacefully. Save them! He demanded, tears of blood streaming down his eyes as he desperately tried to reach out with his hands and ground his teeth! Then he died!”

Save them! Save me! How long had Carad said those words?

Whether it was in their hearts, or on the brink of death, or in their daily lives... The demihumans of Jirad never stopped saying those words.

“Descendant of the ferocious crystal, a member of the Fang Tribe (Werewolf), I am the Tyrant, Mido!”

As the light from the torches touched the werewolves, their spirits rose.

In the dark of the night, those plains Carad once dreamt of appeared, and the man before him –No, the hero, Harid, howled out these words: “I’ve come to save you, brothers!”

Mido howled as his emotions flowed out of him.

“Brethren of the south, forgive our delay! But tonight! We shall at long last restore your glory. The hero, Harid’s, dying wish shall today be fulfilled!”

There wasn’t a werewolf who did not shed a tear at those words.

“Break free from your chains and stand, brethren!!”

The hero had at long last come to save them.

“With these hands, let us take back our freedom!”

That night, the 200 slave demihumans of the elves switched sides to the Forni-Goblin Coalition.



level has risen.

Gi Do's level has risen.

81 => 89

Gi Za Zakuend's level has risen.

56 => 61

Gi Ji Arsil's level has risen.

14 => 21

Gi Ba's level has risen.

24 => 53

Gi Jii Yubu's level has risen.

1 => 5

Gi Ah's level has risen.

1 => 10

Gi li's level has risen.

1 => 6

Gi Uu's level has risen.

1 => 13

Hal's level has risen.

86 => 95.

Mido's level has risen.

95 => 97

Chapter 136: Sylph Unification War XI

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	59
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

Living trees opened the northern gate from inside, revealing the crimson bloom of the red burning flames within. A smile surfaced on my lips, but the cruel thoughts that lingered within my mind, made that smile come out cold and cruel.

“The demihumans are allies! Those who surrender, capture them! Those who fight, end them! Go!” I led the horde through the gates while I swung Flamberge from my shoulders.

“Don’t let the goblins leave you behind! Onwards!” The araneae, Nikea, said from the darkness.

Fire spread to the trees, dyeing the elven village in the red hue of the flames. It seemed it wouldn’t be long before the flames burned everything.

“At this rate, the village will...” Some elves spoke among themselves anxiously.

Unfortunately, we don’t have the leisure to hold back. The enemy forces are

at least twice as big ours. On top of that, they're outfitted with superior equipment. We have to fight like this if we are to win.

"Defeat the enemy quickly, then extinguish the flames. If you're worried about the village, then defeat the enemy first!" Fei told the anxious elves.

His words were reckless, but they were agreeable words.

If we don't defeat the enemy here, setting the village on fire would have been for naught.

"Let us settle things here once and for all!" Fei said.

With that his men finally showed some resolve.

As the elves picked up their bow and sword, I ran after Fei and ran alongside him.

I thank him for getting the elves in order, but he shook his head and said, "It wasn't for your sake. Someone had to tell them, and we couldn't possibly push that onto Master Shure."

He nocked an arrow as he ran, barely stopping even as he shot it toward the elves.

A worrywart for his master, huh.

"WooOON!" Cynthia, a daughter of the fang tribe despite being born away from it, led the pack of gray wolves to the south ahead of us. Behind her were the giant gray wolves as they made their way for the Fang Tribe.

"Gi Jii Yubu! Move your forces from the north to the west! Limit the enemy's escape route!" I commanded.

"As you command!" He responded.

The battle demon, Gi Jii Yubu. He has grown enough that I can now feel at ease leaving one side of the army to him. The newly evolved rare goblins, Gi Ah (One Who Encroaches into the Divine Region), Gi Ii (Explorer), and the Ferocious Gi Ba are with him as his assistants.

"Gi Ji Arsil! Move your forces to the east and stop the enemy at the south! Don't get caught in the fire!" I commanded.

“As you will!” He responded.

Ru Rou and Hal from the tribes are with Gi Ji Arsil. The araneae chieftain, Nikea, is with him as well.

I’m a little worried, but he should have more than enough firepower to take down some panicking elves.

“Rashka, Fei, Gi Za Zakuend! Lead your forces and follow me! We’re going south!”

“My fists will make songs out of their skulls!” Rashka said.

“Very well!” Fei said.

“Exactly as I was hoping for!” Gi Za Zakuend said.

Like that we followed after Cynthia.

Our army consisted of elves, normal goblins, and even druids, which the shaman, Gi Za Zakuend, led. The wind magician, Gi Do, and the water magician, Gi U, are under him well.

Rashka is following me because I couldn’t think of anyone else he’d be willing to follow. As a member of Gaidga and their chief, his power as a duke class is something to fear.

Gi Jii has just recently become a noble and Gi Ji has only started to get his feet into commandership, so since I couldn’t leave Rashka with anyone, I decided to just take him with me instead.

As I ran while giving commands, Shumea ran up to me.

“Boss, let me go too!” She said.

The distant fire illuminated Selena’s face, who was behind her.

“Sure, I don’t mind. Though it sure is rare to hear something like that from you,” I said.

She wasn’t the type to seek battles out on her own.

—Oh I see... It must be because of that person Selena is looking for.

“Don’t worry, we just have some errand to take care of!” Shumea said as she

took Selena with her and left, spear in hand.

She could have asked for my help, and yet she didn't. She probably considers it something personal.

But I did promise to help...

"Fei, can you send someone to go with them?" I asked.

"Would 5 be enough?" Fei asked.

"Yes!"

At Fei's behest, 5 elves followed after the two girls. I couldn't send goblins, as they might end up causing needless battles.

I thought the strong winds would blow the fire, spreading it even more, but it seems the roads and the wide plazas in the village have kept them from spreading.

Well, that's alright. We have more than enough chaos.

"To victory! Onwards!!"

I led my army to meet up with Mido in the south.



Fires rarely broke out in elven villages. One reason was because they hadn't fought wars in a very long time, and another reason was because of the forests' barriers. Besides, how could fire be likely to occur in the elven villages, which were blessed by the wind and water gods themselves?

But unfortunately for the elves, their unrest had changed the barrier.

That was especially true for Sinfall, where the elves had built gates and walls with living trees to make a fortress of sort. Of course, the alterations made wasn't enough to affect the barrier spanning the whole forest, but it did affect the arrangement of the giant trees. And that was enough to alter the blessings of the wind and water gods. Like that, the elven villages, once impervious to fire, became fuel for the red blooming flower that was fire.

Fortunately, they had a central plaza, which separated the southern and northern districts, keeping the flames from spreading too quickly. But to the

elves who weren't used to fires, that was irrelevant.

When the elves saw the billowing smoke and the red burning flames, many of them chose to flee. Those who couldn't fight fled to the north, while the warriors, despite being intoxicated, moved about haphazardly as they looked for their platoons.

Of those elves, the ones who fled to the north faster than the others ended up clashing with Gi Ji Arsil's forces. With the fire yet distant, the ones who ruled the darkness and fought ferociously were Nikea and her araneae.

By grinding a subspecies of glowing moss, and then using that as medicine, the araneae were able to see despite the darkness and were able to put up threads around the area, allowing them to intercept the fleeing elves.

"A mere swing of our blades will not suffice to thank the Forni elves for all that they've done!" Nikea said.

At that, the araneae used the threads they'd set up to run the village's outer walls, raining attacks on the unsuspecting elves from above. In no time at all, the fleeing elves were subjugated.

The elves had run as fast as they could, not even bothering to take any belongings with them. Because of that most of them didn't even have any armor. Their bows were all that they had.

With their sharp claws and their nimble bodies, the araneae made short work of the elves. Yet even scarier than the cluster of araneae was Nikea, what with her claws dripping with poison and her threads that entangled the elves.

The araneae weren't the only ones attacking the elves, however. While the araneae were attacking the elves, Gi Ji Arsil and his goblins aimed for the elves' throats from the darkness.

After failing to infiltrate the human fortress and meeting the orcs, Gi Ji learned the importance of number. And so, after returning to the Fortress of the Abyss, he requested for normal goblins to be given to him.

He trained those goblins during their march here, and somehow he managed to make it in time. This war would be their first battle. Lurking in the darkness, they jumped for the throat of the weakest looking prey from the flock.

Gi Ji and his group of specially trained goblins used their short swords to attack the elves from the shadows. They picked them off one after another, leaving the panicking elves as helpless as sleeping kittens. The resulting mental strain from fighting an opponent one couldn't see was even greater than the actual damage dealt by Gi Ji and his gobs.

"Surrender! Or else you shall all die!" Hal declared on rider-beast-back as he led the Paradua goblins.

"Show the chief our strength! Onwards!" Dashka said as he led the goblins. Rashka's participation in the battle had greatly roused his spirit.

"Don't hit your allies! Remember, we have our own battle!" The young Ru Rou of Ganra said as he led the lone archer unit of the goblins.

Like that Gi Ji Arsil's battle at the east gradually moved down to the south.

At the same time, the elves to the west were also being pushed back by Gi Jii Yubu.

"Gi Ba, take 8 groups of goblins to the front, and stop the enemy! Gi li, take 10 groups with you and take a detour from the right. Gi Ba, take the enemy head on!"

Gi Jii Yubu gave precise instructions as he led the rare class goblins.

"Boss, enemy, many coming," Gi Ah reported after returning from his scout.

"So the main force is coming here? It seems we will be getting the tastiest part."

Closing his eyes for a bit, Gi Jii thought of the terrain and their forces, then he struck his iron spear into the ground.

"At the behest of our lord, we shall drive the enemy to the south! Gi Ah, speed up the extermination of the enemy. Take 12 groups with you and attack the enemy Gi Ba is fighting with from the flanks!"

"Understood!"

As Gi Ah set off, Gi Jii set off as well.

"Pale Symphoria, was it? I think it's about time I paid you back for all those

defeats.”

As Gi Jii looked toward the south, he said those words. With resolve, he went down further south.

The elves running up ahead froze the moment they saw us. Some carried a babe in hand, others were unarmored women, some were elderly. Apparently, most of the noncombatants were fleeing through the north.

There were so many of them I didn't know what to do.

“...Fei, can the elves take care of these people?” I asked.

“Of course!” He replied.

The gray wolves running up ahead under Cynthia's lead cut a path through the elven crowd. We had to hurry, lest we wished to find ourselves drowned in this sea of refugees.

The elves probably won't follow goblin leadership, but if it's their fellow elves ruling – even if they are their enemies – they should be more compliant.

“Open a path! Don't block our way!” I commanded.

When the elves heard that, they split into two groups, opening up the middle.

“Thank you, King of Goblins,” Fei said.

I looked at him oddly, not sure why he was being thankful.

Sensing that, he continued. “Though they come from different villages, they are still our brethren. We are much obliged that you have chosen not to harm them.”

“You don't need to thank me. All I seek is victory, so don't go start seeing me in some strange light.”

I have no intentions of massacring the elves.

Besides, I actually want to fight with them as allies one day. Needless slaughter is best avoided.

Fei chuckled a bit when I said that, then we continued on our way.

Gradually, we neared the distant torchlight. As we did, more and more burning trees came to view. The wind that blew was already warm. Fortunately, the smoke billowed up above our heads.

The sooner this battle ends the better.

“Mido! Where are you!?” I called out as I searched for the leading actor of this battle under the crimson sky.

It was then that elven warriors stood before me.

There were about 50 of them.

“Surrender! Or die!”

As I said that, I filled my legs with ether and swung Flamberge. With a single stroke, the enemies outfitted in srilana equipment flew to the sky.

“We’re under attack! Enemies are coming from—”

I ran with the black smoke as cover, then I swung Flamberge – and with its great weight – cut down the screaming elf.

When I neared the elves, they looked blankly at me.

I warned you!

Enchant

“Turn me into a blade!”

Ether coursed through the blade of Flamberge, giving rise to sonorous black flames.

First stroke.

In an instant, the black burning great sword cut the elves in half.

Second stroke.

Then in the next moment, it claimed their necks.

It didn’t matter how thick their armor were. Before Flamberge, they might as well wear leaves.

“GURUUuUoOoOAaOAaA!”

At the bellowing of the World-Devouring Howl, the elves cowered. I leaped

for the elves, sword in hand, and though they tried to defend, Flamberge mercilessly took their lives.

I ran through the now open path.

“Follow the king!”

After I broke through the elves, the army behind me followed. There was no rest for the elven soldiers. In fact, it only got worse. For the shaman, Gi Za Zakuend, followed after me and used his magic to summon blades of wind, ripping the elves into shreds as the druids under Gi Za’s lead casted their own spells.

Srilana armor might have the ability to disperse ether, but that also has its limits. Once that limit was crossed, the srilana armor will no longer be able to protect its wearer. The elves cowered before the might of the druids.

Slash

“My fury howls!

Then Rashka came along and sent the elves flying with his burly arms. Like a one-eyed fiend, he swung his club and wreaked havoc on the elves, stirring up a bath of blood and flesh.

“We will expand the opening the Goblin King has made. Three parallel shots! Fire!”

At Fei’s command, the few elves under him shot their arrows toward the enemy elves.

“WoOn!”

I looked up when I heard Cynthia’s cries.

“Mido! Are you alright!?” I asked.

As the light of the fire touched Mido’s body, it revealed his bloodied figure.

“Ah, ahh... If it isn’t the Goblin King! How about it? Wasn’t the result great?” He said.

“Indeed. With this, victory is ours. The only question now is how much further we’ll be able to push this advantage.”

“Today shall be a day of reckoning. Those who’ve sullied their hands with the

blood of my brethren will pay!”

“WooOON!” Cynthia barked.

“Y-Young lady! You actually came!”

One moment, Mido’s face was like that of a devil’s, then in the next moment, his face was like that of an excited little boy.

It didn’t last long, however, as he quickly assumed that scary face again.

We were still in the middle of a battle.

Once, the gray wolves Cynthia led meets up with the Fang Tribe, we will be changing our attack patterns.

Gi Ji and Gi Jii are fighting at northeast and northwest respectively. Their battles should be progressing downwards. Naturally, that means the enemy will have to respond accordingly, or they could get caught in the smoke and head north.

We came here to the south to meet up with Mido, but more than that, our real objective was to hit the enemy from behind.

East or west? Which one should we attack from both sides first?

—East, huh.

*THUMP THUMP. For a moment, Verid throbbed.

My warrior’s instincts are telling me to go east, but in any case, the only difference is which one we get to first.

“Eliminate the enemy to the east. Follow!”



The whole village went into an uproar as it caught fire.

“By the gods... They’re willing to go this far?” Felbi muttered in disbelief.

Pale agreed with him though she didn’t bother to voice it out.

The distant fire seemed like it would cover the whole village in the blink of an eye.

Pale’s face was as cold as ice, but inside, her brain was running as fast as it

could to devise a plan. The fire they were seeing was coming from the south.

Pale might have experienced a fire or two herself, but most elves hadn't. They looked on blankly at the scene before them.

"The village is burning..." They muttered.

Pale had overcome many fires with her adventurer friends in the human world before.

She spoke firmly to stifle the unrest she was feeling. "We can still make it!"

"But the village is..." The elves argued.

"That fire won't go beyond the south. Remember! What is the geography of the village? There are roads and a plaza in the center, right? The fire from the southern side won't be able to cross those. The northern side should be safe."

Pale's words managed to persuade the elves.

"However, this fire was probably started by someone. We have to make a decision, Felbi," Pale said.

"W-What?" Felbi asked.

"Are we going to fight? Or are we going to flee? Make a decision."

Pale's gaze shot through Felbi. Pale was feeling partly responsible due to her failure to predict this sort of counterattack. In the end, however, the commander was Felbi. He had to be the one to make the decision.

Pale could only watch intently at the male elf commander as she awaited his orders.

The initiative has already been taken by the enemy. Be it momentum or position, the enemy is superior in all fronts.

But they haven't lost yet.

A fire burned within Pale, though at the same time, reason told her they should flee. That wasn't a wrong choice, but they could still fight.

Without the chiefs pulling her around, she would be able to fight as she pleased. Of course, they would be fewer than the enemy at the start, but if they could confine the enemy within Sinfall, they might eventually be able to turn

the board against them.

Pale refused that tempting voice that sought to convince her to fight. The one calling the shots wasn't her but Felbi. That was her excuse, at least.

"...Do you think the chiefs have fled already?" Felbi asked.

"With this fire they're probably still in the process of—" Pale responded, but Felbi spoke again before she could finish.

"In that case, we fight!" He said.

When Felbi said that, Pale closed her eyes for a moment.

This battle was their loss, but she had a duty to make mitigate their losses as much as possible.

"There will be many casualties," Pale said.

"I know," Felbi nodded.

Pale began organizing the soldiers. "First Platoon to Sixth Platoon, equip yourselves with swords! Seventh and Eighth, bring your bows! The first and second platoon are to bring their armor as well! Soldiers who can use water magic are to report to me! You will be the keys to our victory."

Their formation this time around was much more melee-oriented compared to normal.

"May we all live through this. The blessings of Chenzhen (Forest God) to all!"

The soldiers spoke after her.

"With Za Ruga (God of Bows) !"

"Glory to Iren (Water Goddess) and Castor (Wind God)!"

The soldiers under Pale were filled with morale.

They went straight south for the village, picking up other soldiers along the way.

"Gather under the flag of Symphoria!" Felbi said as he led the army.

As he did, he made sure to put the wounded and the able into different groups. Those who couldn't fight were put on standby at the back. They hurried

even more to where the flames were.

By the time they got there, the flames were already walls of flames.

“The demihuman units have rebelled? Felbi! From here on, consider all of the demihumans enemy!”

Though the approaching demihumans were few, Pale still trembled. With the demihumans’ rebellion, 200 soldiers were taken from their forces and added to the enemy’s. All that was left was the 300 soldiers under her and the scattered soldiers.

“Cast water onto the flames! Create a path!”

The water mages forcefully separated the elven warriors from the demihumans and extinguished the flames. After a big enough path was created, Pale and her soldiers left the area.

They made their way toward the village while fighting a hard battle and paying attention to the direction of the wind. From time to time, when the black smokes were low, they would use magic to stir it up, allowing them to make their way with the smoke as cover.

Breaking through the wall of flames, Pale ordered her soldiers through the opened path.

On the other side, the village was still standing.

“It deviated to the west a bit!” Pale muttered to herself.

They could still do this, she told herself.

There were some elves surrounded by goblins.

“Save our allies! First Platoon to Third Platoon, attack!” Pale commanded.

“Alright! Let’s go, boys! Attack!” Felbi said after Pale.

The moment Felbi led the vanguard to fight the goblins, Pale gave orders to the archers at the back.

“Watch our allies. High-angle fire, two shots!”

Pale drew her bow as well.

“Fire!”

At that, the goblin encirclement broke, but before they could finish them off, they retreated.

“They’re getting used to this, but... We can’t lose yet,” Pale said as she confirmed the situation.

The scope of the fire wasn’t that big. They should be able to save several of their brethren.

“Felbi, keep going and push back the goblins! Archer unit cover them! Fourth to Sixth Platoon, you are to rescue our brethren!”

After saving their allies, they asked them where the chiefs were.

When they responded ‘East’, for some reason, Pale’s eyes went dark. That was a long way away, but they had to do it. After collecting herself, Pale started handing out orders again.

“First Platoon, Second Platoon, watch the rear. Third Platoon to Sixth Platoon, you are to rescue our chiefs! Forward!”

The heavy infantry – the First and Second Platoon – were to suppress the goblins, while the light infantry were to save the chiefs.

Like that Pale headed east with the elves they’d saved as their guides.



After crushing about three elven platoons, the battle demon, Gi Jii Yubu, received a powerful attack, causing their encirclement to break.

“This is...”

The force of these new enemies were clearly much greater than before! They were faster, stronger, and had high morale! But more than anything else was that powerful pressure they exuded!

Gi Jii Yubu knew this pressure well. After all, he had lost the king’s soldiers countless times to it. He couldn’t possibly forget it.

Gi Jii grit his teeth. “I’ve been waiting, Pale Symphoria!!”

He held his spear so tight it seemed like he was about to crush it, then he

ordered his men. “Reform battle lines! Gi Ah, Gi li, hold position until Gi Ba finishes retreating, then retreat in order!”

The goblin forces that had become panicked because of the raining arrows gradually fixed their formation.

A fire burned within Gi Ji, but despite that, his mind was perfectly clear.

“Gi Ah, Gi li, spears at the ready! Take a detour through the left and attack the enemy inside the flames!”

The fire was gradually nearing the back of Pale’s soldiers, but it was also burning the village.

The soldiers at the vanguard were equipped with armor as usual. Neither spear nor sword could really get through them.

If so, then the most they could do now was to attack them inside the flames even if it means incurring damage themselves. That was the only path to victory.

Gi Jii gave those orders after immediately realizing that.

“Nu!?”

But just when he thought the enemy would push toward them, they suddenly retreated. In fact, the light infantry that were suppressing them all this time were actually moving east.

“You intend to go to our lord?”

Gi Jii thought the enemy was aiming for the king.

“I don’t believe our lord will lose, but... As long as I’m still standing, you can forget about touching the king!”

For the sake of the famed name of Gi Gu Verbena, Gi Ji, who had been given authority over the king’s army, could not allow the enemy to run from in front of him.

“Gi li, take the vanguard and pursue the enemy! Don’t let them near our lord!” Gi Jii commanded.

The explorer, Gi li, led his goblins and pursued the enemy.

“Gi Ah, Gi Ba, you are to take the enemy from their flanks!”

After the three rare-class goblins went their way, Gi Jii ferociously laughed.

“My lord, soon I will be able to offer you Pale Symphoria’s head.”



I went south according to my warrior’s instinct. I counted the time we had left after glancing at the fire approaching from behind, and then I prompted the soldiers to move faster.

As we passed by the trees the elves used for their dwelling, the enemy elves came to view. They stood close to each other in a tight formation.

“Go! Trample them!” I commanded.

As I swung Flamberge, Rashka ran alongside me.

“I’ll be going ahead!” Rashka said with a fierce smile.

“You wish to go ahead of me? Then go! But don’t ever stop, Rashka!” I said.

“Ridiculous! Who do you think you’re talking to? In front of me, even the mountains will make way!”

A black light filled the two clubs in Rashka’s hands.

Ra

Gilion

“Clad me in violence’s dignity!”

Black light gathered onto the two clubs, and then it shot towards the tight formation of the elves, scattering them.

“Anyone who stands in my way will be crushed!” Rashka’s bellowing declaration made the elves cower.

As I watched Rashka’s gallant figure create an opening with brute force, I ordered the soldiers. “Follow Rashka! Slaughter the enemy!”

Battle cries resounded from behind at my command.

The srilana armor of the elves were crushed before Rashka’s brutish strength. When his clubs swung down, helms were crushed. When his clubs swung up, elves went flying. Even the heavy infantry wasn’t spared.

One of the elf groups stood out. Heavy infantry surrounded numerous gaudily

dressed men. They were probably the bigwigs.

Good! If we get them, we can put an end to all this!

“The enemy’s leaders are there! Take their heads and put an end to this war!”

At my behest, the elves, the Gaidga tribe, the demihumans, the normal goblins, everyone followed after Rashka and wreaked havoc throughout the battlefield.

—255 days until the war with the humans.

Chapter 137: Sylph Unification War XII

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	59
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

“Fuck! This is a waste of time!” Shumea cursed after cutting down the elves blocking their way.

Shumea and the elven escorts protected Selena as they ran away from the black smoke.

“Why are elves so stubborn!?” Shumea complained as she roughly wiped her cheeks of soot and blood.

“S-Sorry...” Selena found herself apologizing for some reason.

“I’m not blaming you. Anyway, let’s hurry. They know we’re here.” Shumea wryly smiled and rubbed Selena’s head.

After catching some elves to ascertain Pale’s location, they ran through the smokes and the flames.

“...What are you going to do once we find her? You have thought of it, right?”

From what they’ve gathered, Pale was currently leading an army of elite

soldiers.

Shumea has already considered the worst possible scenario, but despite that, she didn't have any intentions of dissuading Selena from meeting her.

"I don't know, but I think I'll know once I meet her. At that time, I don't think I'll regret it even if I end up as the king's enemy."

"I've always liked how gutsy you are," Shumea said, then she turned around to the elven escorts given to them by Fei. "You can go back now. If you keep following us, you might end up drawing your bows against your master," she said.

The elves looked at each other, then one of them stepped forward.

"Our duty is to protect you, Lord Shumea. We will accompany you until we have ascertained that you are indeed Forni's enemy," the elf said.

"Naive. Or maybe you're stupid... Well, I don't hate that though. I'm kinda like that myself after all."

After running past the black smoke, Shumea looked around her.

"We've arrived at the eastern side. That way should be the north!" Shumea said.

"Can I ask you a question?" One of the elven escorts asked.

"Make it short," Shumea said.

"Lord Pale is the enemy commander. Surely, she will be accompanied by many soldiers. What will you do about them?" The elven escort asked.

"We'll break through," Shumea matter-of-factly said.

The elven escorts were speechless.

"Do you have a plan?" The elven escort asked.

"Of course not! The only thing I've got is a girl's guts! So if you're going to tag along, you better make sure you don't wet your pants!"

As they ran, the figure of the goblin king and the elves fighting came to view.

"Is everyone ready?" Shumea asked.

When they nodded, she narrowed her eyes.

“Let’s take happiness with our own hands. Even if it means prying it from fate’s mouth by force.”

Loved by a resident of the fire god’s household, the god of flame, Hektokrups, Shumea smiled fiercely in the face of battle as she cried out to foe and ally alike.

“Ora ora ora! Get out of the way! A human is passing through!!”



Rashka’s black light blew up on the tightly packed enemy formation. His speed didn’t slow down even a little as he charged toward the enemy. That valiant charge of his affected the other warriors, and we followed after him.

Rashka swung both of his clubs at every direction. Battle-wise, he was indeed one of the best among the goblins.

His great strength bore a hole in the armored elves’ line. As his rampage continued, the elves’ movement gradually became duller.

“Just a little more and we’ll be able to win! Don’t slow down even for a moment!” I said, causing the goblins to cry out in response along with the Fang Tribe and the elves.

But then a rain of arrows descended where Rashka was.

“Nu!?”

When I turned around, the enemy was there.

The light infantry that arrived aimed at Rashka. Their movements were like the turning of the waves. There was not even a single hint of hesitation in them as they attacked in turn. But what was most conspicuous of all was the great morale they had!

—So you’ve come, Pale Symphoria!”

The chiefs or the tactician. Whose head should I pluck?

For a moment, I wasn’t sure what to do, but in the end, I decided to go for the enemy chiefs.

I ordered Rashka to proceed while defending only as much as necessary.

Selena and Shumea couldn't reach her in time, it seems.

Alas! I cannot hold back in battle! Especially, one so strong!

"Rashka, keep going like that and take the heads of the enemy chiefs! That will be the greatest achievement in this battle!" I said.

"Alright!" Rashka fearlessly smiled as he raised his clubs.

"Fei, Mido! We're intercepting the new enemy! Follow!"

"Understood!" Mido said.

"As you wish," Fei said.

I aimed my sword at the new enemy.

They could move quickly, but they had to sacrifice their armor to achieve that.

Wielding my sword by my side, I swung it from below.

—Pale Symphoria is up ahead. I should take her head myself. It is only courteous to do so.

As ether coursed through my legs, I lowered my body enough for Flamberge to touch the ground.

The main force was with Rashka. As for the rest: the remaining demihumans, the elves, and the rest of the goblins – they fought with me.

Accel

"My life is like dust!"



After confirming sighting of the chiefs' army, Pale gave orders to the soldiers.

" platoons, advance in line! Avoid the goblins as much as you can. Felbi second platoon, to the front!"

Pale ordered the second platoon that was protecting their rear to go to the front. In exchange, she ordered the third platoon to move to the rear.

When Pale sent a fleeting glance at the goblins, she immediately noticed their high morale, then she looked toward the front again. The giant black goblin was leading an army of demihumans, elves, and goblins. There was a leader for every group.

Could she really do this? She asked herself as she looked up.

“Everyone, give me strength.”

Suddenly, she closed her eyes and thought back to the days when she fought with the members of Clan Elks.

Pale’s quiet mutterings were drowned out by the sound of war.

“I can do this! I’m going to protect my family!” Pale opened her eyes and said that to herself.

Their aim was the three-headed beast of an army that was headed toward them.

“Archers, parallel volley! After me!”

Pale pulled an orichalcum arrow from her quiver and filled it with ether.

“Second, fourth, fifth, and sixth platoon! Parry the enemy ahead! We’re going to graze past their nose and save the chiefs!”

She intentionally spoke like that. Normally, she preferred to speak with more formality, but that kind of language was unsuited during war.

The various platoons cried out in response to Pale’s commands.

As she released the string of her bow, the sound of wind cutting echoed alongside the cries of the orichalcum arrow. It flew fiercely through the air as it shot forth toward the enemy.

Wind

Shot

“Winds, give me power!”

Her target was the Fang Tribe member leading the demihumans.

That was none other than the man who double-crossed them. If she recalled correctly, his name was Mido, a Fang Tribe chief.

The enemy’s vanguard was pursuing after the chiefs.

As she watched the rear guard be torn apart all at once, she followed after the arrow with her eyes. A fearsome scream resounded at its descent as Mido repelled it. But that one shot wasn’t enough to break the enemy’s formation. When the rest of the archers shot their arrows, the enemy forces finally stalled.

The second shot.

This time their aim was the elven army, which sought to stop them.

Barrel
“Winds, give me your blessing!”
Shot

But the enemy noticed what they were trying, and their arrows passed by each other at roughly the same time. The wind pressure from their arrows altered each others’ course, leaving behind a streak of red blood across Pale’s temple.

Though they failed to follow-up that arrow, they still managed to hit the shoulder of the second head.

“Next!”

“GURUUuoOOOAaOA!”

As Pale drew her bow again, a world devouring howl bellowed. Its great pressure bore down on them as the Goblin King swung his black burning great sword to cut down the elves in half.

The light infantry wasn’t his match.

Pale immediately gave out orders.

“Third and fourth platoon, go to the chiefs! Second platoon, make two lines from the front to the rear!”

Pale ordered the second platoon to make several layers of walls between her and the black goblin.

“Over here, monster! I’ll be your opponent!” Pale said.

She mustered all of her ether and gathered it onto her arrow.

Storm
“In the name of the fierce winds!”
Bullet

The gathered winds blew behind the arrow, propelling it forward as they drew a helix shape on the air.

“GURUuuOOOAaAoo!”

But just when the arrow seemed like it was about to hit the Goblin King, the Goblin King swung his black burning great sword, causing the collision of two

great masses of ether.

The two masses of ether sought to destroy each other. The black flames tried to devour the arrow of wind, while the latter tried to bore through the black flames.

Pale was already at her knees due to the great consumption of ether.

The Goblin King ground his teeth and put forth even more ether into his great sword.

Pale finally understood that a direct confrontation was disadvantageous, so she switched roles from a warrior back to a commander.

After receiving the charge of the elves, the goblin forces were in chaos. Forcing their way through the interim of the goblin forces and the chiefs' forces was exactly Pale's plan.

With her elven forces attacking the goblins from the flank, the battle had slightly swung to their favor. But at this rate, they will have no choice but to withdraw from the battle and run. She looked at the rear and the front.

The rear was being held well by Felbi, while in the front were wounded demihumans. Despite that the elven forces had slowed down their momentum.

Pale figured that it should be possible to make use of the time difference to cut their way through.

"GURUuuOOOAaA!"

—That's if we can take down this monster, anyway.

The Goblin King, who could stop even Pale's attack, was unstoppable. He was like a storm as he mowed his way through to Pale.

"Second platoon, move to the flanks!"

Pale was so spent that even her throat felt like it would burst from giving orders.

By moving the second platoon to the flanks, there would be no one to stop the Goblin King.

Hands shaking, she drew her bow once more.

“Come,” she said.

Her hands no longer shook when she held her arrows. Her focus, which she had sharpened all her life, allowed her to become as still as tranquil waters.

In her hands was a special Srilana (Blue-Silver Steel) arrow.

Her aim was the unstoppable Goblin King’s forehead.

Perfectly focused, she calmly aimed her bow.

I flicked the wind arrow and ran toward the enemy.

There was about a 50m distance between me and the enemy, a lone female elf with a bow in hand. That person was none other than Pale Symphoria, the elven warrior who has foiled our plans time and time again.

Standing in between us were several heavily armored elven warriors.

But did she think something like this would stop me? If I were the sort to stop because of something like this, I would never have said I would take her head in the first place!

“Second platoon, move to the flanks!”

A calm voice resounded throughout the battlefield, then the elven heavy infantry moved to the flanks.

With this there was no one standing in our way.

What is she thinking? I don’t understand.

—But that doesn’t matter!

Ether coursed through my legs as I wielded Flamberge in a low stance, then I bolted off. I leaped through the earth in a crawling fashion, closing our distance in the blink of an eye.

“Second platoon, close it!”

Suddenly, the heavy infantry that had moved to the flanks began to move back, closing the opening once more.

Were they aiming for me!?

With this I've been separated from the goblins.

Damn! The blood got to my head, and I lost sight of my surroundings. Now, I'm surrounded.

Well, then...

—In that case, I'll just have to meet your expectations, won't I!?

“GURUuOOAaOaOooO!”

When I invoked the Soul of the Berserk King, soldiers behind me stopped mattering. It's not a one-on-one fight, so I can't maximize my strength, but I'm still able to bolster my strength in exchange for some sanity.

—Defiant Soul!

If my path of escape has been cut, then I'll just have to cut a new one!

If I'm surrounded, then I'll just have to break through!

That's all there is to it!

With the invocation of The Third Chant, the black flames surging from Flamberge became fiercer. In fact, they burned so fierce I had to suppress them a bit.

I don't need a place to run!

—There is an enemy! An enemy, enemy, enemy, enemy, enemy in front!!!

After struggling to take back control of my crazed mind, I swung Flamberge at the soldiers around me.

The raging black flames tore through their shields and deflected their weapons.

The heavy infantry was different from the light infantry.

When I felt Flamberge stop, I turned, and there I saw three elven warriors.

I am going to pluck Pale Symphoria's head!

After sweeping with Flamberge, I held it toward the front and rammed it along with my body into the enemy formation.

“My life is like a cloud of dust!”

Ether blew up behind me, propelling me forward as my black-flame clad sword tore through the air and penetrated the elven soldiers.

The complex invocations of ether coupled with the wall of air I pushed myself through left my vision covered in a layer of burning heat.

But I didn't stop. I kept going with my great sword penetrated into the elven warriors, using them as a shield.

“—, GU— Ga—!”

Incomprehensible sounds leaked through my mouth, but I ignored them and continued to deflect the enemies in front.

After a while, I finally broke through the enemy formation.

I took the elven-branded corpse shield I had and threw it away, then I walked toward Pale Symphoria.

I've won!”

“GURUUuoOAOaAA!”



The Goblin King was overwhelming.

Not even the wall of heavy infantry could stop him in his path as he swung that giant sword of his with terrifying strength.

Black flames clad his great sword, sharpening its blade. Srilana (Blue-Silver Steel) had a dispersing effect on ether, but the Goblin King still managed to cut through the soldiers with ease.

But it was also because of that that Pale Symphoria knew he could reach her.

Pale looked on at the majestic figure of the king.

She knew full well what the price of dragging this king who could lead so many out here.

From the start, Pale's only goal was to kill the Goblin King.

Hordes of goblins she had never before seen followed him. The demihumans

followed him. Even the elves...

At first, Pale couldn't believe her eyes, but it didn't take long for her to realize she wasn't dreaming.

The elves under Shure Forni might indeed be the ones standing in their way, but the one that brought everything together, allowing this war to rage on, was actually this Goblin King.

The spectacular retreats during the battle on the highways, or the plan to sacrifice the village to overcome their lack of numbers. Chances were that this Goblin King was behind everything.

What a terrifying existence.

But that was precisely why she had to slay him.

The main pillar was the Goblin king; therefore, if he were to die, then the whole structure that was the enemy army would come tumbling down.

The vigorous, enthusiastic goblin army was all Pale needed to see through the Goblin King's true nature: a crazed warrior.

To such a person, it didn't matter how big the prey was. To him, there was nothing he couldn't hunt.

So she laid out some bait and lured him into a trap.

"Second platoon, go after the third platoon! Once you've reached them, run to Symphoria without stopping!"

Rescue the chiefs and retreat to Symphoria. The light infantry had already received those orders beforehand. Even their path of retreat through the west.

Her last orders having been given, Pale prepared to face the strongest enemy.

Her bow was loaded with the Trichella Arrow, which she had specially ordered from a koro dwarf. It was a powerful arrow that would split itself several times before burying itself into its target. An arrow that could instantly slay its target.

The Goblin King's special trait was the enormous amount of ether he possessed.

Those black flames probably originated from Altesia, the Goddess of the

Underworld, or Ya Jansu, the Night God, either of which were detestable to the elves.

Pale would disperse the Goblin King's ether, and then kill him.

Pale had previously learned from the east the method of sealing ether. That was her trump card.

To that end, Srilana (Blue-Silver Steel) and Trichella Arrow were both necessary. In fact, she had asked for Trichella Arrow to be made the moment she saw the Goblin King. Unfortunately, preparing it was so difficult that they could only prepare this single arrow.

She could not miss. If she missed, she was guaranteed to die.

The sounds deafened as her focus heightened. The Goblin King's sword swung like a storm.

When Pale thought he had stopped, he suddenly accelerated with terrifying speed.

"...!?"

Pale panicked for a moment at the sudden increase in the Goblin King's speed, but she quickly regained her calm.

The Goblin King was too fast.

As the Goblin King threw away the corpse of the skewered elven warrior, the warrior's blood splattered onto Pale.

Despite that, Pale didn't even twitch.

Pale needed just one moment, one moment where she was sure the Goblin King wouldn't be able to dodge, so she decided to shoot the moment he swung his blade.

The Goblin King was too formidable, however. Even if she did manage to shoot the arrow, his sword would still surely cut her in half.

—Death.

Pale knew she was going to die, but despite that she did not falter.

—Sorry, Selena... It looks like I won't be able to meet you after all.

In the silence, where all sounds were absent, Pale quietly apologized to Selena.

Then in a flash, a powerful wind erupted from the silent Pale.

From silence to movement.

Pale opened her eyes wide and glared at the Goblin King. The gaze shooting from her eyes threatened even the Goblin King, but the die had already been cast. His sword mid-flight, he could no longer retreat, so he mustered even more ether, causing his black flames to burn even fiercer.

“Pale!!”

It was then that a voice suddenly cried out.

“Huh?”

For just one moment, Pale forgot everything and turned toward that voice.

Because of that she shot the Trichella Arrow a moment later than she’d intended.

“HiyaaaAAa!!!”

“Nu!?”

Shumea jumped in between Pale and the King, parrying the king’s attack with the spin of her spear.

The king had immediately noticed what was going on, so he changed the direction of his great sword.

Unfortunately, because of that, he couldn’t dodge the Trichella Arrow in time, and he was forced to his knees.

“Shumea—” The king was about to say something, but after seeing Shumea’s current state, he swallowed his words.

On Shumea’s back were wounds incurred from magic, while the spear she’d used was cut in half, her hand bloodied.

Yet she still smiled fearlessly and said to Selena, “Go.”

After she saw Selena embrace Pale, she finally lost the last of her strength and

she fell to her knees.

“Sorry, Boss...”

“Reckless girl.”

The Goblin King stood with his great sword as support.



Behind Shumea were the elven escorts who had cast a spell on her.

She couldn't make it in time with normal means, so it seems she had them cast their spell on her to propel her forward like a bullet. What a reckless plan.

Because of that though I don't feel like killing Pale anymore.

“I hope you realize you're being punished once this battle ends,” I said.

“Please be gentle— Ow!”

I tried to stand up with my great sword, but I couldn't muster any strength and ended up on my knees again.

The ether that usually came welling was nowhere to be seen. When I looked down to my body, I noticed the three arrows stuck on my body.

“So you're the reason.”

When I took an arrow out, my strength started coming back. After taking everything out, I could feel my strength return.

The heavy infantry Gi Jii had been suppressing was now heading here.

“It seems we don't have the leisure to be lazing around.”

I still hadn't fully recovered, but I still forced myself back up and tried to point my sword at Pale only to end up taking a step back.

This is bad. I still can't gather my ether. If the enemy army arrives, I'll be in trouble.

“Pale!” While I was trying to get my footing, the warriors Gi Jii had been suppressing arrived. They unsheathed their swords, wary of me, then after carrying Pale and Selena, retreated.

I thought of chasing them, but unfortunately, I couldn't get any strength into

my arms.

“We’re retreating! Go!!” An elven man commanded.

“My lord!!” Gi Jii said.

Looking around, there were no more elves left. Relieved, I thrust my sword into the ground and fell to my knees.

“Are you alright!?” Gi Jii asked.

I nodded. “Chase them, but don’t go too deep. Also, inform Rashka and Gi Ji to...”

—No.

I fought back the urge to fall asleep and forced myself up.

I am the king.

I must stay strong.

Gritting my teeth, I raised my voice and commanded Gi Jii. “Go, Gi Jii Yubu. Do not let them escape!”

“As you command!” Gi Jii said kneeling, then he ran after the enemy.

With this we’ve successfully taken back Symphoria.

—255 days until the battle with the humans.



Level has risen.

59 => 71

Gi Do’s level has risen.

89 => 1 (Class UP)

Gi Za Zakuend’s level has risen.

61 => 82

Gi Ji Arsil’s level has risen.

21 => 37

Gi Ba’s level has risen.

53 => 81

Gi Jii Yubu's level has risen.

5 => 27

Gi Ah's level has risen.

10 => 42

Gi Ii's level has risen.

6 => 38

Gi Uu's level has risen.

13 => 40

Hal's level has risen.

95 => 5 (Class UP)

Mido's level has risen.

97 => 5 (Class change!)

Cynthia's level has risen.

1 => 36

Shumea's level has risen.

67 => 89

Chapter 138: Sylph Unification War XIII

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	71
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

The Battle Demon, Gi Jii Yubu, led the assassin, Gi Ji Arsil, and the wrathful demihumans as they chased after the Symphoria army all the way to the Symphoria forest. Along the way, they captured the forests of Sheng and Jirad, leaving only Symphoria on the resistance’s side.

Many elves was defeated in the battle at Sinfall, bringing the casualties and number of captured soldiers to approximately 200 men in total. Because of that they had no choice but to flee to Symphoria.

The gates of Symphoria were shut tight, not opening even once since the elves returned.

As for me, that just means I have more time to examine the newly evolved goblins and formulate a new plan.

“If they won’t attack, we’ll have no choice but to attack,” Shure said.

There’s just no other way, but on the other hand, if we attack recklessly we might just get done in by Pale’s schemes.

“But sheer brute force isn’t a strategy,” Shure added.

A meeting was currently being held in one of the houses of Sinfall. The one talking was Shure, who had been a great help in these past few battles.

“In other words, attacking head on would be inane,” the representative of the demihumans, Nikea, said, causing Shure to nod.

“What a pain, just beat them up be done with it already,” Mido complained.

“And add more corpses to your dead brothers? Imbecile,” Nikea spat as she glared coldly at the werewolf.

“They’re scared!” Mido argued. “We should attack while the war favors us!”

He had a point, however. If we kept wasting time like this, we might end up throwing away the momentum we’ve gained.

“We should surround Symphoria then,” I said, causing all eyes to gather on me.

Symphoria was big, so big that the southern part of it was a desert while the northern part of it connected to Sheng. The boundaries on its flanks were ambiguous.

“How?” Mido asked with a stiff voice; and that was not because of his wounds.

“We can clear a path through the forest.” I drew a circle with my fingers on Shure’s map.

“...Is this feasible?” Nikea asked.

For a moment, Shure became thoughtful with a hand on his chin, then he turned toward me with a clever look on his face. “It should be possible so long as we concentrate our forces. If nothing gets in our way, we should be able to execute within 20 days.”

Of course, this whole plan was actually a bait to lure out some prey. To that end, we needed to ensure that word got out.

“There’s no need for us to go about this quietly. If anything let’s execute our plans boldly in the light of the day with loud voices and cheering. In fact, we

should do it while yelling ‘At this rate, you’re all going to starve!’”

The demihumans gradually understood what I was aiming for.

“Hmm, will it really be that effective?” The only one who couldn’t quite comprehend yet was Shure.

It’s not surprising though, after all the elves have never understood what it meant to starve. They don’t understand how terrifying it is.

He probably didn’t think much of the blockade last time either. At most, he probably only thought of it as a mild annoyance, though I thought it was quite sinister myself... Did I overestimate him?

“There’s no need to actually starve them, just the fear of it will do,” I said.

Compared to actually starving, the fear of starving would demoralize the enemy much faster.

“I see, so you intend to flush them out by scaring them with the threat of starvation,” Nikea said, thinking out loud with her arms folded.

“I don’t think that’s possible,” Shure quietly interjected as he looked at Symphoria on the map. “They are not so foolish as to fight a losing battle. Falun Gastair is with them.”

Shure’s sworn friend was still within Symphoria, playing his part as a chief who had surrendered.

I don’t understand that old man well, but if he can somehow prove useful in collapsing the enemy from within, I won’t complain.

“Let us hope he comes through then, but until then, it would be foolish for us not to have a contingency plan. I take it we are fully prepared for the last battle?” I said.

“Of course!” Mido said.

“Naturally,” Nikea said.

I turned to Shure. “Let us make the last battle a spectacular one.”

“As you wish. With this, we will finally be able to put an end to this fruitless war, and I will finally be able to show you that your investment was not a

waste,” Shure said.

After the meeting, I went outside and bitterly smiled at Rashka and the other goblins waiting.

“Unfortunately, it seems we will have to wait a bit longer,” I said.

“Hmph... It seems the fun will have to wait,” Rashka said.

“A pity, my lord,” Gi Jii said.

Then I turned to the gathered goblins and said, “What happens next depends on how the elves will move, but...”



I examined the newly evolved goblins and gave family names to those worthy.

Status	
Name	Gi Do Buruga
Race	Goblin
Level	1
Class	Shaman
Possessed Skills	Magic Manipulation; Realized Wings; Protection of the Wind; Wind Spear; Three-Verse Chant; Guidance of the Goddess of Knowlegde; Researcher
Divine Protection	Wind God
Attributes	Wind

Realized Wings

Can fly for a short duration.

Researcher

Higher chance to stumble onto a new discovery.

Protection of the Wind

Incurred damage can be rendered null. (LOW)

Wind Spear

Conjures a spear made out of wind. When used accuracy and power are both increased.

Status

Name	Hal
Race	Paradua Goblin
Level	3
Class	Noble; Chief
Possessed Skills	Mounted Spear Mastery; Beast Control; Spear Mastery C+; Leadership C+; Charge; Cooperation B-; Riding; Inspire; Fierce Charge; Hero of the Battlefield
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None
Subordinate Beasts	Miou

His ability to wield the spear and cooperate with others have both increased. He has also acquired a new skilled called ‘Hero of the Battlefield’.

Hero of the Battlefield

When fighting a lone enemy alone, attack, defense, and critical rate are increased.

	Status
Name	Mido
Race	Werewolf
Level	5
Class	Chief; Tribe Guardian
Possessed Skills	King of Tyranny
Divine Protection	Wind God
Attributes	Wind

King of Tyranny

In exchange for inflicting damage on oneself, one’s physical abilities are heightened.

After seeing everyone’s status, I began organizing the soldiers. I reorganized the druids with the newly evolved Shaman, Gi Do, as one of the main pillars. I moved the wounded to the back and had those still able to fight to form new three-man cells, then I created a new unit with ten such cells.

I distributed the soldiers in order to the Battle Demon, Gi Jii Yubu, the assassin, Gi Ji Arsil, and to the rest of the noble goblins.

When all was done, I went to the house the elves gave me.

“How are you doing?” I asked.

“You’ve been spoiling me a lot, Boss,” Shumea wryly smiled as she raised herself up on the bed.

“Don’t worry, I’ll work you lots once you’re up and running.”

It would be a pity to lose her. I still need her in the war against the humans.

I know full well from this war against the elves just how difficult it is to gather intel in a war between different species.

Before the war against the elves had broken, while we were still fighting the demihumans, what would have happened if one of my allies happened to slip into the enemy lines?

It wasn’t exactly Shure’s idea, but after one of ours infiltrated the enemy lines, the enemy became divisive and the war progressed smoothly.

Still, I didn’t expect someone like Pale to join the fray. Symphoria’s resistance was a lot greater than expected.

In any case, there is one thing to learn here: I cannot fight a united human race.

They must be divided.

“...Is that my punishment?” Shumea asked.

“Yes, so you should heal up until then,” I said.

“Being tolerant is good and all, but... Don’t you think you’re being too lenient, Boss?”

I raised one of my brows and wryly smiled. “Then I’ll have to think of a better punishment. I know, shall I whip you in the plaza for all to see?”

“W-W-Wait a moment! I’ll die if you do that!” Shumea said in panic, arms flailing.

I folded my arms. “If you think my punishment is too light, work yourself hard enough to make up for it. But right now you should rest. I can’t have you work while injured. I mean you can’t even use your strength, can you?”

“Well, alright. Can’t say I really have anything to complain about when you’re feeding me all the yummy stuff and letting me sleep on this fluffy bed,” Shumea said, then she heaved a sigh and looked up at me. “Hey, Boss, about Selena...”

“We don’t know yet. If it’s something I can help, I’ll try to tide things over, don’t worry.”

“This debt is going to be heavy.”

“Don’t worry. I’ll work you so hard you’ll start screaming.”

“Ooh, scary... Then I guess I’ll have to rest lots.”

“That’s right. Rest. Rest well.”

The war against the humans aside, I do hold her tendency to risk her life for others highly. Besides, I didn’t exactly want to see a young woman die anyway... It would’ve reminded me of Reshia, after all.

I failed to save her.

Try and try as I might to forget, the events of that day continue to haunt me.

A little glance away from the battlefield, a moment of negligence... and all of the sudden, the worst possible end flashes through my mind.

Gripping my hands tight, I desperately denied such a conclusion.

“Wait for me...” I whispered.

Brushing away the cries of remorse welling from deep within, I moved on.

“We should attack!” Felbi said.

In the residence of the Symphoria chief, within a large room, was a meeting where the prominent members discussed how they were to deal with the predicament at hand.

The chiefs Fenit, Sheng, Jirad, and Priena had fled here after losing Sinfall. Falun Gastair was also with them, though his village was yet to capitulate. Pale and Felbi were also present.

Felbi has been persistently asking for a while now that they attack posthaste.

Word of the Goblin-Forni Army's objective had already reached Symphoria through the distant village of Gastair. Just as the intel said, the Goblin-Forni army have started attacking Symphoria's supply lines.

"If we don't attack now, it'll be too late!" Felbi insisted.

"But can we win if we do fight? The difference in our strength should be clear as day," Falun said, causing Felbi to frown.

"It would be difficult indeed, but delaying only makes our situation worse," Felbi said.

"So you wish to gamble everything on one battle instead? Do you really think we can win?" Falun's calm gaze bore heavily on Felbi. "The only soldiers that can fight are the same soldiers who have been fighting from the start. The volunteer soldiers from the small villages have started plotting their escape the moment their villages were captured. Exactly how many soldiers do you think we can muster?"

"...50 heavy infantry, 60 light infantry, 70 archers. This are our current forces," Pale calmly said, causing all eyes to gather on her, though she didn't say a word more.

"According to Gastair's intel, the enemy has taken in the soldiers from the other villages, bringing their current forces to 700," Falun said.

The enemy was literally three times bigger than their army. The gravity of that difference caused the whole room to go silent.

"Pale," Felbi called out despite growing irritated at Falun's incessant questioning. He wanted to seek her opinion, which she gave without turning to him.

"The first issue is the numerical disparity. Sending the same soldiers that fought in the last battle would only tire them out, so it is indeed impossible to increase our numbers, but—"

"Enough!" Fenit, the representative of Symphoria, interjected. "The meeting is adjourned!"

“What? But Pale is still—” Felbi argued.

“Shut it!” Fenit said. “As chief of Symphoria, I hereby order this meeting be adjourned!”

“Ku... I understand. Please excuse me,” Felbi said, standing up and then bowing before finally leaving the room. Pale helplessly followed after him.

After they left, Fenit clicked his tongue in anger. “Did they really think we would stake everything on one battle!? If we followed their plan, who knows what terrifying fate awaits us! At this rate!”

“The goblins will eventually make their move,” Falun said.

The chiefs all gulped when Falun pointed that out.

“We can’t supply our soldiers forever. Not even the emergency reserves will be enough to feed everyone. Not to mention, the soldiers fighting would truly be nothing more than a last stand. At this rate, the long history of Symphoria will vanish into nothingness,” Falun added, causing all members of the meeting to stop breathnig for a moment as they imagined that terrifying possibility.

“What should be done then?” Jirad asked. Fenit had gone completely quiet out of depression, but he thought the old elf might have a plan in mind. “Is there any guidance you might be willing to share with us, elder?”

“There is, but it is a humiliating path, perhaps more painful than death,” Falun said.

“You couldn’t possibly...” Priena gulped in a long while since losing Sinfall.

“We should reconcile. Look for a way to make peace,” Falun said.

“Now? Of all times?” The short statured Silver who had barely managed to flee Sheng with his life powerlessly shook his head.

“Perhaps a mere surrender won’t be accepted. In that case, we could offer them a tribute of some kind,” Falun said.

By this time, the people gathered finally understood where Falun was getting at. Now, they wondered who Falun had in mind. They exchanged glances amonge themselves, wondering wretchedly who should be sacrificed.

“For example, the person who made them suffer the most in this war,” Falun suggested.

Silver immediately disapproved. “But that’s...”

But Fenit was all for it. “Do you think they’ll accept?”

He even ignored Silver and directly asked Falun how likely the goblins were to accept.

“The enemies are goblins. Have you ever heard of a goblin refusing a fair maiden? Not to mention, the very person responsible for much of their suffering.”

“Meanwhile, we can bide our time and recover our forces,” Jirad said, earning Priena’s approval.

“Goblin rule wouldn’t last anyway. I’m sure even Shure will be abandoned.”

At the onset of a faint hope, the voices of the chiefs naturally became smaller.

“But who’s going to negotiate peace with them? Will Shure even hear us out?” Jirad asked, causing the room to go quiet again.

“Let me take that stage,” Falun confidently said. “I was once his teacher, after all.”

There was no other path left. They had their doubts, but there was nothing they could do but accept Falun’s proposal and see how things go.

“What about the soldiers? Do you think they’ll quietly accept this?” The chief of Sinfall, Priena, asked.

Falun caressed his beard. “That will be a problem, actually. We will have to find a way to separate her from the soldiers.”

“I-I have something that can help with that! I have proof that Pale betrayed us!” Fenit excitedly said.

Unfortunately, poor Fenit did not notice Falun’s mischievous smile as he excitedly revealed his plans. And neither did the rest of the excited chiefs.

From that day on, a strange rumor started circulating within Symphoria.

—Pale has been tricked by the demigod of the night god’s household, Verdna,

and has betrayed us. That's why we lost!

That rumour quickly spread.



10 days after the meeting, it suddenly happened.

Selena and Pale were relaxing in their residence when out of the blue, the door was suddenly kicked, and in came rushing Fenit's private soldiers. Before anyone knew it, Pale was tied up with a rope and a sword was pointed at her neck.

"What are you doing!?" Selena cried, but the soldiers quickly knocked her out to make her quiet.

Without a word, those same soldiers took Pale and dragged her to the plaza, where the people showered her with jeers.

Waiting for her there were Fenit and the other chiefs.

"I can't believe you had the gall to betray us, Pale!" Fenit's voice was tinged with both hate and a faint trace of joy.

The crowd jeered harder when they heard Fenit's accusation.

"W-What are you saying!?" Pale thought she was seeing a nightmare. "What is the meaning of this, Fenit!?"

"Don't call my name with your dirty mouth, traitor!" Fenit said as he slapped Pale on the cheek.

"This woman has sold her soul to the demigod of the night god's household, Verdna, and has brought a calamity upon my village!" Fenit declared.

"What foolish thing are you saying! I have no relations with Verdna!" Pale argued.

"Unfortunately, we have eyewitnesses. Two, in fact." Fenit pointed to a female elf he had whispered to once before and a man serving in her unit as a messenger.

"I stand witness that Pale Symphoria has indeed spoken to Verdna at the bathhouse of Sheng!" The woman said out loud.

“That wasn’t Verdna!” Pale argued.

“Not Verdna!? Then who was it you were meeting at Sheng’s bathhouse?” Fenit asked.

“I... I don’t know that either, but—”

“Look! The traitor can’t even come up with an excuse! Truly, a detestable liar!”

“You’re wrong! I’m not—”

Pale desperately tried to defend herself but her words could only vanish into the jeering crowd.

“Let us hear what the people want then! Those who wish to see Pale executed, clap your hands!”

The resulting applause was like the heavy downpour of death, crying out for Pale’s soul.

“I have heard your pleas. And I would like to grant your wish! But before that, there is something I wish to ask,” Fenit asked.

The crowd went quiet.

“Pale has indeed committed a great crime. But can we oppose the will of the gods? Is there anyone who can say with confidence that they could go against the will of the gods!?”

The crowd exchanged glances with each other.

“None, of course. I think so too. If destiny was decided by the gods, then would not Pale herself be no more than a victim?”

Falun was thinking that things had taken a strange turn, but Pale was able to correctly guess Fenit’s intention. The man was intending to use her until every drop of blood from her body had been sucked dry.

“That being said, however, we cannot simply let her go unpunished. For to do so would be to spit upon those who have perished; therefore—!”

Fenit spread his arms and said. “We shall crush her eyes, and then exile her!”

The crowd cheered at Fenit’s proclamation.



Sitting before me were the elders of the elves I've been fighting.

Every one of them looked at me with fear in their eyes as they either flattered me or frowned in disgust.

15 days after Sinfall capitulated, when we were halfway done with our roads as we prepared for our eventual clash with Pale, the report came.

The elves have surrendered.

"Impossible," I thought immediately, but it was only for a moment, as the man who declared himself to be Falun Gastair's messenger told us the appointed date and the procedure.

"Don't they still have soldiers?" I asked Shure as soon as the messenger left.

"Elder Falun must've convinced them. As usual, he's good with dirty things like this."

Apparently, this was the real deal.

"Their conditions?" I asked.

"They will be handing Pale Symphoria, Selena Shiren, and the commander, Felbi," Shure said.

"Isn't Pale Symphoria their benefactor?"

It was precisely because of her that the chiefs were saved during the battle at Sinfall. Didn't they abandon their lives during that battle?

"Elder Falun didn't say anything in the reports about a trap. They seem to be truly intending to hand over their heroes in exchange for their lives," Shure said with disgust.

He must be furious. After all, the race he is so proud of is acting like some lower lifeform. To someone as noble as him, it must be a feeling no different from having mud thrown at his face.

It seems Selena is being sent with them.

"I understand. We'll accept their peace, but they must ensure that they hand over those people safely. If those people have even a scratch on them, they will

pay with their heads.”

A curious look appeared on Shure’s beautiful face.

“You can’t use them as hostages, yet they’re that valuable?”

“They are far more valuable than having the chiefs as hostage. It wouldn’t do if they were to be killed just like that... Besides, with this we’ve finally unified the sylph.”

We have never spoken, but I am deeply interested in that elven woman, Pale. Polished strategies that led her armies to victory, a charm that encourages her allies... Yes, I must have her.

“...I have troubled you much during this war,” Shure quietly closed his eyes and deeply bowed.

“We’re friends, right? There’s no need to be so formal,” I wryly smiled.

Shure nodded. “Thank you for giving me this opportunity to deal with them with my own hands.”

“I only take what I want,” I said.

And then, we went to the designated place.



That day, the 76-day Sylph Unification War ended in the victory of the Goblin-Forni Army.

At the designated place, the leading actors, Pale and Felbi, were handed over to the goblins, but the Goblin-Forni coalition demanded one more thing from Symphoria.

They demanded that the chiefs be dismissed.

Of course, the chiefs refused, but then the Goblin King said this.

“Shall I draw the curtains on war once more?”

The pressure emanated by the Goblin King silenced the chiefs, forcing them to accept his conditions.

The Sage’s Council was recreated under Shure’s leadership, and the whole

sylph race allied themselves with the goblins. From that day on, the elves began to move.

—240 days until the war with the humans.

TI Note: 🎵🎵🎵 If you want Pale to be executed, clap your hands! 🎵🎵🎵

Chapter 139: Banquet I

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	71
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

Symphoria handed over Selena and the male man, who – if i recall correctly – was named Felbi. He glared at me with marked hostility, while Pale Symphoria had her eyes shut tight.

The people participating in this meeting were the elven chiefs, me, Gi Za Zakuend, and Nikea.

“It seems you failed to meet my demand,” I said.

“W-What are you saying!? We’ve given you the tactitian and the commander!” Fenit said with great fear.

I looked at him sharply. “I believe I asked that they be handed without injury.”

“But they resisted! There was nothing we could do!” The slender man called Nash Jirad argued.

“I don’t think you people understand your position,” Gi Za said, causing the enemy chiefs to look alternatingly between me and Shure. “Know that you

stand here today because of our generosity. I hope you do not misunderstand yourselves as being our equal.”

Nash Jirad ground his teeth so hard it could be heard clearly. That seemed to please Gi Za, as he spoke no more.

“You have hit Selena, and it seems there is something wrong with the tactitian’s eyes,” I said.

“Her eyes won’t open anymore. We all agreed to crush her eyes before exiling her. It was a decision made by the Sage’s Council. Your demands came too late,” the small-statured elf, Silver, said.

Rage took me, and before I knew it, I had him by the neck. “Lowlives! How low are you willing to go? And to your benefactors no less!”

As I glared at the elven chiefs, I reached out for the great sword on my back.

When the elven chiefs saw that, they all screamed.

“King of goblins, your anger is well placed, but it is not your place to punish these people.” But then Shure’s calm voice suddenly resounded.

“These people—” I tried to argue.

“You are the benefactor of the elves and the king of the goblins, but you are not the king of the elves. Please do not forget that,” Shure said with a gaze full of conviction, persuading me to put Silver back down on the ground.

“These people will be punished by the law, yes?” I said.

“Of course,” Shure wilfully nodded.

At that, I withdrew.

Since the day we met, he made it clear that the elves had no need for a king... Even though there was none more fitting to ascend the throne aside from he himself.

As long as he believes that, the elves will never accept me lording over them.

“Thank you, Shure! As expected of the hero—” Fenit immediately tried to butter up to Shure after he stopped me, but Shure would have none of it.

“Silence!” He commanded with a sharp gaze and a loud voice all too rare for

the usually composed Shure. “Truth be told, I would want nothing more than to cut you people into a million pieces this very instant! How long do you intend to throw mud on our face!? To think you have the gall to call yourselves chiefs!?”

The anger Shure had been fostering blew up, causing the elven chiefs to wince.

“Nash Jirad, Priena Sinfall, Silver Sheng, and Fenit Symphoria. I hereby strip you of your rights and responsibility as chiefs,” Shure said.

“O-On what grounds!?” The chiefs asked.

“You don’t understand? It must be because you pushed your responsibilities to Pale and made her take the blame. Because of that she ended up working harder than anyone else and fought fiercer than anyone else, but really, that was supposed to be your responsibility,” Shure said, then he finished things off with one last proclamation. “Filthy heathens of the elven race, you should quietly wait in jail for your judgment.”

Shure quietly watched as Fei and the Forni soldiers arrested the chiefs.

“Now, what to do with you?” I said, turning to Felbi, Selena, and Pale.

“Pah! Goblin scum acting all arrogant!” Felbi spat.

I wryly smiled and spat back, “beaten mutts truly do bark loud.”

“What did you call me!?”

“You lost in battle, was betrayed by your allies... And now your lives are in my hands. If this isn’t defeat, what is?”

Felbi’s face flushed, and I curtly said, “I will give you a chance.”

“What chance?” Felbi asked.

“A chance to kill me, but if you lose, the man known as Felbi shall die.”

“You’re challenging me to a duel?”

“Yes. It was from battle that we were born, hence, it is only fitting that one finds life through it.”

As I passed an orichalcum long sword to Felbi, I took out my great sword.

“You’re going to regret this!” Felbi said as he swung his sword.

“That’s my line!” I said as I met his blade.

Seven days later, after losing seven times to me, Felbi finally admitted his defeat, and the warrior known as Felbi died, leaving behind a man by the name of Felbi who was my subordinate.



Meanwhile, while the Goblin King was busy with his duel, Shure met Nash in his office. Nash was cuffed and wore an expressionless face.

“What’s the point of calling me out to a place like this? Does the chairman of the Sage’s Council have some sort of business with little old me?” Nash Jirad asked sarcastically.

Shure’s expression didn’t change as he threw a document on the desk. “What were you doing in Jirad’s hidden forests?”

Nash Jirad’s sarcasm vanished at that question, and he went completely quiet.

“...”

“It’s fine even if you don’t say anything. I’ll guess,” Shure said. “You tried to cultivate the land; tried to imitate the humans. And you even made slaves of the demihumans.”

“!?”

Nash Jirad’s twisted expression confirmed everything for Shure.

“Why would someone so proud such as yourself try to imitate the humans?” Shure asked. “I suppose there’s no need to ask.”

“Yes, it is as you’ve thought. We imitated them to prepare for the coming war with the humans,” Nash Jirad said, finally breaking the silence with a laugh. “If a war were to breakout between the elves and the humans, the forests would surely be razed to the ground. In that case, the elves were bound to starve. To avoid that, I started looking for an alternative way to procure food.”

“Why would you enslave our neighbors despite knowing of the human

threat?" Shure asked.

Nash responded with scorn. "Because the people wouldn't listen. It doesn't matter how much insight a person has, the people would never accept anything that might disadvantage them... even if one tried to explain the threat that looms. To the people, the forest is everything. It is their only livelihood, so I had no choice but to turn to the demihumans."

"Just in case, you don't have any intentions of working alongside me as a manager of those farms, do you?" Shure asked.

"Of course not. That is an endeavor we undertook to protect our pride. We have no reason to work with a traitor the likes of you," Nash Jirad replied.

"I see... You may go."

As Nash Jirad left through the door, Shure sighed deeply to himself.

"A pity... That insight."

Left alone, those farms were bound to rot. He needed to discuss with the Goblin King what to do with them.



After Felbi joined our ranks, we held a large banquet just as Shure suggested.

There wasn't much for the goblins to do in the land of the elves, but there was a lot to study, so Gi Za Zakuend decided to stay here and further his research on ether for the time being.

I would like to go back as soon as possible though.

We have already completed our goals here in the west. We have successfully gained favor with the elves and the demihumans and have even promoted many of our ranks. The anti-human coalition is starting to take shape, but the biggest prize in this trip is actually the acquisition of the world map. Shure had entrusted it to me.

Although the map was drawn with the elven forest at the center, it extends all the way to the continent and the seas. To the north were the mountains and to the south were the deserts. There was much left of this world to see, and that made my heart beat in anticipation.

I also want to return to the east as soon as possible to check up on Gi Ga Rax and the Fortress of the Abyss. The orcs and the kobolds are acting as a stopgap between the fortress and the humans, but that isn't absolute.

Not to mention, I recklessly requested reinforcements. I can't help but worry that we've been spread too thin.

The banquet being held was grand indeed, but it was by no means luxurious. There was plenty of meat to suit the goblins' taste and the elve's special wine was free to drink.

I walked over to the man who recently joined our ranks and poured ourselves a drink.

"I didn't think the Goblin King would partake in such activities," Felbi said with surprise as he watched me pour him a drink.

"I might be a goblin, but I do believe there to be much to learn from the elves. Cartography, literature, arithmetic... There is much to learn, and for the sake of defeating the humans, I believe we should strive to learn them. To that end, I intend to keep myself in your good graces."

Felbi whistled and called out to the now blind Pale. "It's pretty strange, don't you think? We're actually being treated better now than when we were with the chiefs."

Pale made a troubled laughter. "It is indeed strange... Just a few days ago we were still killing each other."

Her eyes no longer functioning, Pale could only rely on her ear to find her way, but she still splendidly found where I was and turn to me.

Selena noticed us staring at each other and couldn't help but worry as she alternately looked between me and her.

"We'll be allies from now on. I still don't understand you very well, but I hope we can get along. Though I have heard a little about you from Selena," I said.

Pale vaguely smiled as she put down her cup and stood up.

"I'd like to feel the winds for a bit," she said.

I watched her back leave as she walked away.

—232 days until the battle with the humans.



Rashka’s level has risen.

67 => 76



Chapter 140: Banquet II

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	71
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (Altesia)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

I turned my back on the banquet and followed after Pale.

The trees grew denser along the way, gradually obscuring the light of the festivities. On the other end of the branches were the twin red moons shining brightly up in the night sky.

“...Can’t hold your liquor?” I asked.

Pale waited for me in an open space within the dense trees, basking in the light of the twin red moons.

“It would be improper to say something I don’t believe to be true,” she said.

The light of the moons reflected off the naked sword in her hands, and then the night winds blew a breeze, lifting the veil that was her golden hair from her face.

Her eyes were shut tight, but true to her fame as a valiant warrior, she could tell where I was.

“Still want to defeat me and restore the elves?” I asked.

“Not at all... It’s just that my knees are too stiff to bend to a monster,” she said slowly and harshly.

But I could feel the strength behind her words as she raised up her sword.

“Consider this the second round. Let’s fight, Goblin King!” She declared, then her figure vanished.

Relying on my senses, I swung my great sword and sparks flashed above me.

There was about a 10m distance between me and her original position, yet she managed to close that in an instant.

“!?” It seems she didn’t expect me to block that attack, as she ended up revealing her position and taking my attack, though it was reflexive on my part.

Pale stifled her shrieks as her posture broke, but I wasn’t about to watch her recover. I swung my great sword with enough strength to split even blue-silver steel in two.

But Pale desperately tried to fend off that attack, causing her sword to bounce up her head, leaving herself wide open. I took advantage of that and swung my great sword at her weapon, effectively disarming her.

Though her eyes remained shut, she looked at me with indignation as I pointed my sword at her neck.

“...Why, won’t, you, kill, me?” Pale asked in ragged breaths.

Sheathing my sword, I answered. “There was no killing intent in your sword. If you want to kill me, you should come at me more seriously.”

As Pale bit her lips, I continued. “Why do you want to die? I’m sure you understand that your death can’t break this alliance. This alliance was set in stone the moment we won the war.”

I was certain she already understood that; if not, then it must be because she doesn’t want to think about it.

“So you’ve already seen through everything...” Pale said with self-derision as she fell to the ground. Her body trembled as she looked up at me.

“I... hate you. Why is someone like you with the goblins? You are strong... So strong that it’s terrifying,” Pale said bitterly.

As she spoke, I noticed that the shaman, Gi Za Zakuend, was hiding above me.

I wryly smiled. *Truly a worrywart.*

“One day, if you keep going like this... you will surely hurt my friends. You are a destroyer of peace,” Pale said.

“Peace? Don’t make me laugh, Pale Symphoria,” I said.

If she thinks there is peace now, then she is horribly mistaken.

“The humans gloat their supremacy and drive the other races to the borders. Yet now they seek to take even those very borders they drove them to. Such a world created by violence is not what you call peace, Pale Symphoria.”

There is no peace. Shure’s map proved that.

Demihumans, monsters, beasts, and barbarians alike are driven to the distant borders, away from the mainland. This world is inhabited by many nations and races, each possessing a different will than the other, each fighting for domination.

In such a world where different races war with each other, could the humans’ path to supremacy possibly remain unobstructed?

—No!

Everyone is putting their lives on the line to expand their domain, waiting patiently for the right moment to jump at each other. Everyone is fighting! That’s why I was so excited when I saw that map!

“Don’t make fun of me. Are you saying... that you’re going to destroy this world?” Pale asked.

“Remember, Pale. Was the human world you saw truly beautiful? Starvation, poverty, discrimination... People accused unjustly of crimes they did not commit; the marked difference between those with power and those without; a world where the law of the jungle reigned supreme. Is that not the true face of the human world?” I asked.

How could I share these feelings with this elven warrior?

“Stagnation is not peace. But if there is such a thing as peace, then... Come with me, Pale. With you and me together, we can create a peaceful world.”

“That is nothing more than your hubris talking! Do you really think such a thing is possible?”

“If there is someone more fitting than I, then I will one day fall before his sword. At that time, you should kneel to that person. But until then, fight for me, Pale Symphoria!”

“Kneeling to a goblin is...”

At this time, I noticed voices approaching us. We did not have much time left so I said, “If you come with me, at the very least, I will be able to protect a single girl. Don’t forget, Pale. That girl was cruelly enslaved by the humans.”

“That’s...”

“Pale!”

Pale was about to argue when Selena ran to her and embraced her.

As she embraced the kneeling Pale, she turned to me with tears in her eyes. “If Pale did something wrong, I’ll apologize. So please! Please forgive her!”

“Don’t worry, she just tripped. The alcohol must’ve gotten to her,” I told Selena, then I turned to Pale. “Pale, consider it. Consider it well.”

In the end, the one to make this decision was none other than she herself.



When I came back to the banquet, Shure looked sharply at me, but I ignored him and ate some meat. After a while, Pale came back with Selena.

Shure calmed down when he saw her safe.

It wouldn’t hurt to be a bit more trusting. I wryly smiled.

When I had emptied my blue-silver steel cup of liquor, Gi Za came along with some meat and asked in hushed voice, “Why do you favor her so, Your Majesty?”

I'm sure he didn't want others to hear his question, but his sharp gaze was irritating.

"...Who is our enemy?" I asked.

"The humans," he replied.

"Exactly. Now, what do we need to defeat them? I have been pondering the answer to this question since the ceasefire," I said.

"Soldiers," Gi Za replied. "If we just had enough soldiers, we would surely be able to overcome them."

"Indeed, if this were the same enemy as last time, that would be the case. But as it turns out, the humans are a much bigger prey than previously thought. The country we're facing is known as Germion. They outnumber us one-hundred men to one, at least. I can't even imagine how many humans that is."

I wasn't exaggerating; their numbers were indeed unimaginable.

"...Is that why you favor the elves?"

"Yes, I want them for their management skills."

The entire human race might be our enemy, but it would still be better to lessen the actual soldiers that we fight. But the problem doesn't end with the war. After we defeat the soldiers, we need to think of a way on how to manage the remaining multitude whose number will surely be greater than ours.

One of the answers I came up with was to create an organization made up of my retainers.

By using the few to rule the majority, we will be able to rule over the humans. But we will need to rule over them efficiently; hence, it would be difficult to rule with only the goblins. That's where the other races come in: the elves and the demihumans.

I will rule at the top, while the goblins handle the military and the elves handle the civil offices. The demihumans will work as a bridge between us.

The goblins and the elves alone will surely end up in conflict due to our differences, so the demihumans are necessary to smoothen things.

“In other words, they are here to do things we cannot?” Gi Za said.

“The goblins will one day be able to accomplish these things as well, but that will take time,” I said.

It’s an issue to tackle if the goblins manage to prosper alongside the other races. I’m not that interested personally, but someone like Gi Za might be interested.

“If you’ve considered it that much, I won’t say anymore,” Gi Za said with a slight pout.

It seems I’ve managed to persuade him.

“Am I that unreliable?” I asked.

“Well you do make questionable decisions from time to time,” he said.

Harsh. I wryly smiled.

“Anyway, from here on, we’ll be able to focus our efforts in expanding our forces,” I said.

Shure has promised me the elves’ support after the war with the humans, so all that’s left now is to increase our numbers, strengthen our ranks, and formulate a plan to defeat the humans.

If I could get Pale, I won’t have so much trouble, but I doubt things would go so smoothly this time. She seems to believe in the humans a lot more than expected. It’ll probably take some time for her to turn to my side.

“I’ve made a lot of debts with the humans. The coming war will surely be a joyful one.”

It wouldn’t be any fun otherwise.

They got one over us last time, so this time, we’ll show them.

“What about you? Do you resent the humans?” I asked.

“It was indeed painful to lose the water mage, Gi Zo, but I’ve been raising some more juniors after him, so... No, I don’t think I resent them.”

He’s not lying. It seems he’s more reasonable than he is emotional.

Well, this is good. It wouldn't do to have him lead a horde if he hates the humans too much, so this is good news.



"Feeling better?" Felbi asked Pale after she came back.

Felbi loved to drink, so much so that he even drank boldly in battle. The cup he used to drink elven liquor might have been small, but he still emptied cup after cup, leaving Pale astounded.

"I see you're immune to alcohol as always," Pale said.

"That's Selena isn't it?" Felbi asked.

Selena's half-cut ears twitched when Felbi called out to her, and she stepped out from Pale's shadow to show her face. She looked just like a puppy, causing Felbi to guffaw.

"I'm not going to eat you. You're a respectable elf, after all."

Seeing Felbi suddenly change the topic made Pale start to think that he was actually drunk for once.

She took a seat with Selena and reassured her. "Don't worry, you can trust him."

Selena nodded to Pale and greeted Felbi. "My name is Selena. It's a pleasure to meet you."

"Name's Felbi. I'm currently working with the Goblin King," Felbi said, then he lined up his cups and started pouring wine again, only to frown upon realizing that his bottle was empty.

Fortunately, Selena had a bottle with her, which she offered to the man. "Please."

"Thank you," Felbi said. "It's only courteous to accept wine when given. Especially, when such a beauty is pouring it. It makes the taste that much better, right, Pale?"

"Selena is still a child," Pale reprimanded with a stiff and threatening voice, making Felbi laugh again.

It was then that a goblin approached Pale.

“Mr. Gi Jii,” Selena said, causing Felbi to scratch his head.

Felbi was still incapable of telling the goblins apart, so seeing Selena easily do so showed just how much time she’d spent with them.

“Lord Pale Symphoria, yes?” Gi Jii asked with a stiff voice as if they were meeting on the battlefield, causing Selena to wince.

Pale patted her on the back to reassure her as she nodded to Gi Jii.

“Yes, that is correct,” Pale said.

“I see,” Gi Jii said as he took a seat across Pale and poured her a cup.

“My name is Gi Jii Yubu. I have suffered many defeats under your hand in the last war,” he said.

A sweet taste filled Pale’s mouth as she took a sip from the cup.

“I hear your eyes can’t open anymore,” Gi Jii bluntly asked despite it being a sensitive subject.

Pale wryly smiled. “It’s probably hopeless. My eyes have been treated with Symphoria’s secret medicine, so...”

“I see...” Gi Jii said, his voice growing fainter.

Pale couldn’t help but wonder why Gi Jii seemed affected by her disability.

“...Will you be leading again?” Gi Jii asked.

“That’s...” Pale wasn’t sure.

Gi Jii sighed. “Sorry, that was insensitive of me. Of course, you can’t lead. You can’t see, after all... You were strong and beautiful. I was elated to hear we might fight together, but it seems that’s impossible now.”

Gi Jii lifted his head and implored Pale to drink her half-empty cup.

“Forgive me. I didn’t come here to grumble. You fought brilliantly, that’s all I wanted to say. If an opportunity comes, I hope we can have a good talk.”

Though blinded, Pale could tell through her exceptional hearing that Gi Jii was indeed a goblin. Yet this goblin was actually talking politely to her. What kind of

goblin was this?

“Why me? You have your king, don’t you?” Pale asked.

“My lord would indeed answer my questions if I asked, but his highness’ time is precious, I would not wish to delay him. Besides, his fighting style is different from mine.”

Glancing at the Goblin King, who was currently talking to Gi Za Zakuend, the shaman whose cheeks were currently stuffed full of meat, Pale implored Gi Jii to continue.

“When I saw you lead the elves, I was astounded. You ordered your soldiers so masterfully it almost seemed like they were puppets on strings. Even now, the ideal commander I see in my head is that same commander I lost to countless times.”

“You praise me too much... I am only self-learned.”

“As I thought, you’re something else.”

As Pale and Gi Jii conversed over liquor, Felbi was sitting quietly in his seat, stupefied. *Damn! The goblin is actually courting her!*

“I knew it. Alcohol is magic,” Felbi said to himself as he somewhat cursed his own constitution.

When he noticed Selena watching anxiously as Pale and the goblin drank together, he patted her on the head. “Don’t worry. No matter how cold the winter, spring will come. But snow won’t thaw suddenly. When it happens, it will happen gradually.”

—231 days until the war with the humans.



Status

Name Felbi

Race Sylph

Level 75

Class Commander

Possessed HeavenSent Child of the Wind; Sword Mastery B+; Bow Mastery C+; Inspire;

Skills	Magic Manipulation; Guidance of the Goddess of Knowledge; Forest Dweller
Divine Protection	Wind God
Attributes	Wind
Abnormal Status	Seven Duels Seven Losses
Status	Blessing of the Forest God

HeavenSent Child of the Wind

Can borrow the wind’s power to increase movement speed.

Seven Defeats Seven Losses

Bound to obey after losing seven times.

Blessing of the Forest God

Can take advantage of the trees better than others when fighting inside a dense forest, increasing sword mastery and bow mastery rank.

Chapter 141: To Riches and Power

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	72
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (The goddess)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

Now, where do I start? Just a few days ago, I was pitying Shure with all the paperwork he had to deal with, yet here I was now in the very same situation. How ironic.

After forming an alliance with the elves and the demihumans, I headed back to the Fortress of the Abyss.

The shaman, Gi Za Zakuend, and the other druids stayed behind with the elves to study, while Cynthia stayed with the gray wolves. Cynthia was already a splendid gray wolf. She would only be holding herself back if she continued to rely on me. I do miss her, though.

To some extent, a road has also been built connecting the Goblin Base with the elves, greatly shortening travel time.

It was a magnificent sight as roughly 200 goblins, elves, koro dwarves, and a human marched back to the fortress.

Along the way, the newly evolved rare goblins were in charge of procuring

food, while I distributed the new normal and rare goblins to their respective platoons.

The assassin, Gi Ji Arsil, and the battle demon, Gi Jii Yubu, both refused to receive a territory. Because of that I had to come up with another way to compensate them.

Receiving a territory meant that one also received a bigger army as well as the responsibility of taking care of the land. Of course, it was always emphasized as a reward, but regardless, since they refuse to accept, then I have to find another way to bestow them those same responsibilities.

“I’ll have the soldiers under Gi Ji Arsil’s direct control be in charge of reconnaissance. I’ll bolster his unit with more men from the base.”

I decided to confer to him 100 goblins.

Once he trains all 100 goblins, we will have a small but elite scouting unit.

“As for Gi Jii Yubu, I’ll have him train the goblins at the fortress alongside Gi Ga Rax.”

The newly born goblins are currently being trained by the knight-class goblin, Gi Ga Rax, in the way of the spear. But while the goblins are getting stronger physically, there is much to be desired when it comes to their heads. Their training is insufficient.

I’ll have Gi Jii fill that gap.

I asked Hal if he wanted a family name after evolving to a noble, but he declined, saying, “To wield Paradua’s spear in loyalty to the king is my pride. Master Aluhaliha would surely reprimand me of greed if I were to ask for more.”

I could only nod to his humility.

The tribal goblins had their own land, so they weren’t very keen on receiving a new name. It wouldn’t do to force the issue.

“A splendid attitude. Keep it up,” I said.

“As you will,” Hal said.

We dropped by the demihuman villages along the way, and when we finally returned to the fortress, it had taken us a total of 11 days from the elven region.

“Welcome home, Your Majesty!”

“My liege, we have been awaiting your arrival!”

Kuzan and Gi Ga Rax welcomed me as soon as I arrived.

“I’m back. I’ve troubled you much in my absence,” I told them, then I turned to Kuzan. “We have new people with us, can you assign them a place to stay, Kuzan?”

“Please leave it to me,” Kuzan said as she hopped with that small body of hers.

“Gi Ga Rax, you have worked hard in my absence,” I said.

“No, I still have much to learn. Forgive me for my inability, My Liege,” he said, kneeling.

Patting him on the soldiers, I said. “It was a duty no one could take but you. Gi Ga Rax, be proud!”

“As you will... Thank you,” he said.

After that I headed to the throne, where the goblins, starting with Gi Ga and the nobles, then the rares, knelt before me.



The goddess sat on her throne as she peeped through her magic mirror. A pure white toga covered her four limbs. She looked bewitchingly beautiful as she sat there with her lustrous skin that was the envy of any woman.

“It went about as expected,” she said.

“Gawayn’s messenger has completed his task as well,” a one-eyed red snake said.

“Did the wind god say anything?”

“He didn’t seem very interested with the spirits. Then again, he has always done as he pleased.”

The goddess laughed. "Pitiful. Try as he might to feign madness and draw his master's attention, in the end, no one cares about him."

"...Master," the one-eyed red snake said when he saw the goddess looking to the distance with sadness in her eyes.

She was probably thinking back to how she was in the past.

"And?" The goddess asked. "What of the spirit?"

The wind god had many dependents, each one uninhibited and whimsical, but most notable of all was their great numbers. Hence, the wind god did not care even when one of them went mad.

"Gawayn's disciple has calmed down, but it's only a matter of time before he truly goes mad."

"I see."

"If you would permit it, there is a person skilled in reading the wind under him. How about influencing that person?" The one-eyed red snake looked at the mirror, whereupon a goblin sat in his throne. "It would be a great boon to us should we succeed."

"Interesting," the goddess said. "Could someone capable of subduing the spirits appear beside him? It's something worth trying out."

"As you will."

In the elven village, a black biting louse appeared before Gi Za Zakuend.



As soon as I came back, I took a look at our current numbers and started assigning work by class. After the war, everything will depend on how efficient we will be able to manage the humans.

When the newly born goblins in the fortress are added to the goblin that went on the expedition, we get a total of 380 warrior goblins.

There are currently 140 females and 50 goblins that are either too young to fight or unable to for some other reason.

The goblins aren't born at a fixed rate; rather, the rate of reproduction is ever

increasing.

A horde of over 500 goblins. Keeping a horde of that size fed is no trifle task.

The goblins might be fine eating even the bones of beasts, but it won't be long before hunting alone will become insufficient for us.

This food problem needs to be dealt with as soon as possible.

It is for that that I asked Shure to send us the demihumans from Jirad. Previously, he came to me to discuss the matter regarding Jirad's farms. It was then that I told him to give me the demihumans.

Neither the elves, the goblins, nor the demihumans originally had any knowledge on farming. In this forest abundant with food, the main livelihood of these three races was always hunting.

But when Nash Jirad realized that the humans might attack, he took the demihumans under him and began cultivating the land of a hidden forest within Jirad. Nash Jirad understood the method, but unfortunately, he wasn't willing to cooperate with us.

In that case, I will have to use the demihumans that worked under him and attempt to rediscover his methods. We'll be fumbling our way through, but hopefully, we make it in time. I don't even want to imagine a scenario where we end up fighting the humans because we ran out of food.

The leader of Jirad's demihumans, Carad, stayed behind in Jirad's hidden forest, while we borrowed some of Jirad's demihumans to help us cultivate our land.

When they investigated the land surrounding the Fortress, they demarcated it and cut down the trees, creating plots of land to use as fields. We used the lumber acquired to work on the fortress.

From the elves, the ones who came to the fortress were Fei, Felbi, Pale, Selena and 30 elven warriors who chose to follow them.

I asked them to make the fields while minimizing the changes to the forest.

"As I thought... There's not enough blessing. I can't use my power normally," Fei said.

“Just do what you can. I don’t want the geography to be altered too much anyway,” I said.

The farther the elves were from their forest, the weaker their ability to control plants and trees became.

Of course, the elves weren’t willing to change the forest into fields at first, but when they saw for themselves how quickly the goblins reproduced, they understood the gravity of the situation and decided to cooperate.

To the goblins, the forest itself was a kind of shield they used to protect themselves. We might be heading to a different stage now, but that doesn’t mean we can change from one extreme to another just like that. Change that comes too fast was bound to recoil.

The normal gobs took on most of the work, though I also helped out while I exchanged opinions with the elves and the demihumans.

We began working as soon as we decided the kind of crop we would be planting, the area we would be using, and the route of the water. The scale was so grand that my eyes went spinning.

Everyone was a beginner, so there was no telling whether this would actually work or not, but that couldn’t be helped. The only thing we could do was to make the best choices and proceed.

This whole thing reminds me of the humans, Mattis and Chinos, who were once with us in the village. If only we had some humans helping out, this whole thing would go much smoother.

Unfortunately, complaining is a fruitless task. All I can do now is to do what I can.



Aside from the food problem, we also had to deal with our defenses.

There was a lot of distance between the fortress and the borders of the forest, but that was not an uncrossable distance to the humans. Moreover, we also had to be wary of any assassins.

The kobolds and the orcs inhabit the area between the fortress and the

forest's borders, so if a large enough army attacked, it will be easy to know. As long as they don't end up like last time, anyway. We'll need to ensure that doesn't happen again.

In this world, there exists people who can destroy an entire army singlehandedly. If such a person infiltrated the fortress and began slaughtering the female and the young, it's game over. The one advantage we have over the humans is our ability to reproduce quickly.

To address that I called Kuzan over and had her move the females and the young to different rooms. So long as they weren't gathered in one basket, even in the worst case scenario, we should be able to mitigate our losses.

The fortress was only two stories high from the ground, but its basement was colossal. It was so big that even I didn't know how big it was, and perhaps, even Kuzan.

"Yes! Your Majesty!" Kuzan cheerfully replied.

I ordered her to take the Gordob and search the Fortress of the Abyss. Her tribe's home under the ground was connected to the fortress, so I picked them out for the search. Just in case, I ordered the recently evolved rare goblin, Gi Ah, to lead a platoon to accompany them.

"As the king commands," Gi Ah said.

Gi Ah led 30 normal goblins to accompany Kuzan and her people. This trip shouldn't be dangerous, but it was always better to be safe than sorry.

In the last battle, the orcs and the kobolds were rendered moot because of the humans' surprise attack. The small elite trampled them, then the human army came.

The surveillance network needs to be improved.

To that end, we will be setting up beacons for signal and reusing Gi Go's old cave as a base in the frontlines.

The next problem is the horde of over 500 goblins. They need to be divided into smaller groups, but who's going to lead?

Rare goblins aren't bad, but they might not be able to last under the stress of

the work. That leaves only the noble goblins up. Gi Jii and Gi Ji have to work at the fortress, and Gi Ga is still working as my representative.

I'll have to get the tribes to help.

I summoned Ra Gilmi Fishiga and commanded him to take some soldiers to the frontline base. The soldiers accompanying him were the beast warrior, Gi Bu, the water mage, Gi Ba, and 60 normal goblins. The same goblins that evolved during the battle with the humans.

I chose the hero of Ganra, Gilmi, to handle the frontline base and its beacon because he was the only one suitable, being a member of the Ganra Tribe, which was the most skilled among the goblins when it came to their hands. They could use bows and even craft their own tools.

Gilmi immediately understood my intentions when he heard my command.

Bowing his head, he said. "As the king commands, so shall I fulfill my duty."

"Ganra's peace lies upon your shoulders. Strive well!"

"As you will."



"You called, Your Majesty?"

"What a nice place. It's so dark."

Answering to my calls was the demihuman's representative, the harpy, Yushika. She had wings on her back and the feet of a bird. In her arms, she carried a bag. She stood out conspicuously in the dimly lit Fortress of the Abyss.

The other one that came was the sleepy-eyed papirsag who carried a mossy shell on his back, Luther.

"Well, it was a rare request from the chief of the winged-ones."

"You don't need to thank me. Our standing is the same as always. So long as there's something to profit, I'll do business with anyone."

Yushika seemed to know what I called her here for, as she bewitchingly smiled.

My request was to trade with the elves and the demihumans.

“And what will you give us in return?” Yushika asked.

“We will provide food and shelter for you along your trade routes,” I said.

Yushika smiled. “You’re serious?”

“Of course,” I said without a thought.

Yushika became thoughtful.

The scariest thing to a merchant is to lose their trade. What I want from them is their ability to move goods quickly by flight.

The creation of shelters along their trade route would allow them a place to rest. They might be able to fly, but they can’t fly forever. From time to time, they need to take a breather and sleep. Sometimes, they need to stop because of the weather, and other times it’s because they were attacked by some beast.

My offer to her is protection.

I have the goblins under my rule and an alliance with the elves and the demihumans. This gives me the ability to position my men along the villages and the roads to ensure her safety. Just having a place to run doesn’t guarantee one safety, after all.

This request is also in preparation of the war, as this deals with the issue of goods and supplies.

It would be problematic, after all, if we ran out of supplies away from the forest. To avoid that, we need her power as a merchant.

“...The winged ones are deeply grateful to the king,” Yushika said with an alluring smile.

I turned to Luther. “I also wish to enlist the Papirsag, who are said to be skilled in woodcrafts. I want you to create me a ‘traveler’s inn’.”

“I’ll happily undertake anything for the sake of the community.”

No matter how well the goblins are at cutting down trees, only the Ganra are able to work with them, but the Ganra Tribe currently have their hands full setting up the frontline base.

In other words, I don’t have enough men.

Because of that I decided to ask Luther of the shell tribe to make the inns, in which I will be stationing my men. They will both act as guards of the inn and as scouts to monitor the other races' movements.

It is imperative that I keep tabs on the demihumans' and elves' movements.

We may be allied today, but there's no telling how long that will last.

Right now, we goblins are dominating, so they choose to be servile. However, should we lose our advantage during the war with the humans, there's no telling whether they'll betray me or not. At the very least, the possibility can't be denied.

Because of that I need to station my troops throughout the region, ensuring that they stay a step beneath me.

"Gi Be, I command you to escort the descendants of the crystals. Protect them well," I said.

"As you will," he replied.

The one-armed Gi Be and the other injured goblins trained under Gi Ga. Though these goblins have lost a body part or two, these goblins are extremely loyal to me. I sent half of them to guard and monitor the other regions.

The goblins with the Man-Eating Snake skill weren't pleased to see that they wouldn't be partaking in the war with the humans, but there was still some time until the war. Until then, I need to increase our forces as much as possible.

215 days until the war with the humans.

Chapter 142: A Challenge to Economy

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	72
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (The goddess)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

“How can we make goblins understand the concept of economy?”

When I asked that question, the smartest of those under my banner scratched their head.

From the elves, representing Shure, were Fei and Felbi.

From the goblins were the old goblin; the battle demon, Gi Jii; and the knight class, Gi Ga Rax.

From the demihumans, the mud-shelled tribe (tarpidae), Fanfan; and the man-bull tribe (minotaur), Kerodotos.

From the humans, Shumea.

“Goblin King, I think it would be better to give it up,” Fanfan said.

“I would prefer if you tried thinking about it first though,” I said.

Felbi scratched his head. “I think it’ll be difficult. I mean, to begin with, they don’t even understand the concept of bartering, right?”

“Well, yes,” I agreed.

“Your Majesty, what is this ‘economy’ you speak of?” Gi Jii asked, causing the other goblins to turn to me as well.

Stop looking at me with those resigned eyes.

“How do we go about this?” Fei started politely explaining. “Alright, for example, Gi Jii, let’s say there was a spear you wanted. To obtain it, you asked a koro dwarf to make it for you. But that koro dwarf can’t make it without food... Do you follow?”

Gi Jii, Gi Ga, and the old goblin looked at each other and then nodded.

“More or less,” Gi Jii said.

Fei heaved a sigh of relief.

“So, in other words, we should prepare some food?” Gi Ga asked.

“Yes, but if the koro dwarf wants something else, you must provide that instead,” Fei said.

“...Mu, mumu? Why?” Gi Ga asked.

Fei turned to me with pleading eyes.

“In other words, you say what you want~ and I say what I want~ and we exchange!” The minotaur, Kerodotos, said in that ever slow fashion of his.

“What if we don’t have what the other party wants?” The old goblin asked.

Kerodotos answered. “Then there’s no deaaaaaal~”

“Then what if our respective offers don’t match? For example, one side wants a double-head while the other wants a bundle of herbs?” Gi Jii asked.

“That certainly doesn’t add up!” Gi Ga angrily nodded.

“Then you should rejeeeeeect~” Kedorotos said.

“In other words, if we don’t like the deal, we refuse?” Gi Jii asked, and Kedorotos nodded.

The three goblins were bewildered, but they somehow managed to grasp the concept of trade.

“My king, what is the point of discussing this?” Gi Ga Rax asked.

“It is something you need to understand before we can continue,” I said.

Among the different races, the humans can be said to have developed their economy the furthest. In fact, according to Shumea, most of humanity has already adopted currency. It was such that bartering could rarely be seen – if ever-even in mid-sized cities.

Small villages still bartered, but there was no doubting how advance humanity’s economy was.

Goblins need to understand currency if they are to rule over the humans.

They need to understand humans.

I won’t ask them to be painters or artists, but at the very least, they need to understand the reason humans fight, the secret behind their strength, and the areas where they are ahead.

By knowing one’s enemy, there is a chance that one might just find a weakness.

It is not good to be ignorant... Though the pursuit of knowledge is never easy. Especially, in our case, it seems.

“From now on, I want you to gradually teach the goblins starting with the rare class about economy,” I said.

“As the king commands,” Gi Ga Rax said as he bowed with the others.

Hopefully, they’ll be able to understand currency as well.



We took the koro dwarves from the defeated villages of Jirad, Sinfall, Symphoria, and Sheng to our headquarters because of various reasons.

One reason was because I was hoping to emulate some of the elves’ technologies at our headquarters. The koro dwarves knew which ores to pick and how to process them. Compared to them, the goblins don’t even know which ore can be processed into iron.

If the goblins could at least learn to distinguish the ores, we would be able to

increase the mining rate of these resources, allowing us to produce more equipment.

The second reason is to allow them to exchange pointers on technology with Ganra. Perhaps even the demihumans could join them. By doing so, I hope to encourage the goblins and the demihumans in their endeavors.

Sharper swords, multi-purpose spears, and light yet strong armor.

We need to better our equipment to increase the survival rate of our warriors. To that end, I need to borrow the strength of the koro dwarves.

The elves may be safe within their territory inside the forest, but of the three races in our alliance, the goblins are the furthest and closest to the humans.

We can't allow the humans to reach our headquarters.



I spread the map I received from Shure.

It's a map we got from the elves, so the goblin headquarters was dotted on it a little too far to the east.

To the north were the continuous mountain ranges, at the center were the forests, and to the right were endless plains dotted with forests. Down to the south were the deserts, then the sea, beyond which were a group of islands. Finally, to the west could be seen plains, beyond which was the distant continent.

The mountain ranges of the snow god to the north, home to the humans who live with the snow. They have almost never encroached into the forest, so they aren't enemies, but they aren't allies either.

I thought back to my conversation with Shure as I traced the map.

The southern deserts, the great desert of Ashunasan, the god of the desert. Inhabiting these lands are a paltry group of humans and those who live in the desert. These people have never invaded our lands either.

Though not as vast as the east, the western plains are quite extensive themselves. Beyond the western plains is a sea, at the end of which is the distant continent.

There are forests dotting the plains. There might be other sylphs living there.

The salamanders live in a corner of the volcanic region to the west, while the undine live in the water capital to the east.

The gnomes live in the mountain ranges to the north. They seem to live in between our home and the human territory.

The greatest threat, the human kingdom of Germion, lies directly east of the Fortress of the Abyss. From there, going north leads to the mountain ranges of the snow god, going south leads near the boundary of the desert, going west leads to the Forest of Darkness, and going east leads to the Holy Shushunu Kingdom.

According to Gi Ji Arsil, the humans have built a stone wall at the border of the forest. I wonder how big it is.

Regardless, I have a good idea what they're aiming for.

They probably intend to create a base from which they could attack. I know because I've thought of the same plan. Create an offensive base, supply it with men and resources, and use that as a point to stage attacks. Unfortunately, I'm not very fond of being on the receiving end of my idea.

Still, this... Let's call it a fortress city. I wonder just how big it is. I doubt they could possibly be so big as to encompass the entire border of the forest.

The main idea should be to surround the capital and attack from there, but... As I thought, I need to find out just how big it is.

"Gi Ji Arsil, I appoint you on a special mission. Work with the orcs and find out how big the fortress city of the humans is. I want to know the scope of the walls and their height, but you are only allowed to look at them from afar. You must absolutely not try to infiltrate it."

"As you will."

Gi Jii called out to the goblins under him and headed East.

There's no actual reason to recklessly attack this fortress city. Though it also depends on what kind of country the humans have, if it's an organization that's capable of creating something as complex as that fortress city, then it should be

enough to get rid of the head. The fortress can be ignored so long as I'm able to take the head of the western feudal lord.

Having all powers gathered onto a single person allows an organization to move efficiently, but it also means that if that person were to vanish, everything would come crumbling down.

I'm only guessing, but on top of the western feudal lord, their kingdom has probably given out lands to various feudal lords to manage and defend much in the same way as the goblins operate.

Though it depends on how close the feudal lord is with the king, the feudal lords must have some degree of independence. We'll aim for that.

That leaves the next question: How much of a threat do you the humans see the goblins as?

If they see us as a threat on the national level, they will hit hard the moment we leave the forest. That would be troublesome.

There's far too much information that needs to be gathered before the war.

Not to mention, I have yet to get word of the goblins I'd sent out before too. Gi Gu Verbena to the south, Gi Gi Orudo to the north, and Gi Zu Ruo to the southwest.

They could have at least sent a messenger in this past six months.



"Orc King, we'll be in your care for a while."

This blue goblin bowing before... If I recall correctly, this is Mr. Gi Jii.

Behind him were nearly 100 goblins gathered.

"Wow..."

I think that was Gui's voice coming from somewhere. There's a hint of resignation mixed in, but I understand his feelings. After all, I feel the same way too. Still... he could be more discreet.

I know, I know.

I don't have to turn around to know the orcs are all looking at me, asking

what we're going to do.

"Welcome," I said. "How long will you be staying?"

"The king ordered us to grasp the scale of the human fortress. We will be returning as soon as we finish our mission," Gi Jii said.

"Is that so? Well, I don't think you'll be staying long then," I said.

"Most likely," Gi Jii replied.

I'm relieved to know they won't be staying long, but do we have to prepare food for all of them? I'd prefer it if they left sooner. There are things I don't want them to see...

The goblins will be going once nightfall comes, so they slept as soon as they ate.

It sure feels weird seeing goblins sleep next to orcs though.

While the small green goblins slept, Mr. Gi Jii spoke with me.

"Orc King, how are your plans to make those small villages going? Are they proceeding well?" Gi Jii asked.

Come to think of it, Mr. Gi Jii was around when I started the first village. He seems to be asking purely out of interest, but I should consider this the same as informing that scary goblin.

How should I answer?

"Everything is going well. The orcs have increased in number, and the enemies from outside are also being kept at bay," I said

"That's good to hear," Gi Jii nodded.

He wasn't probing for information; he was simply and honestly glad at our success.

"But of course, it's not without a hitch. The defense around the new branches are weaker compared to here, and there's also the issue with the water..."

The other villages are too far, so Doralia's blessing can't reach them. The other plants' influence were still too strong, so I took some of her seedlings and planted them, but they're going to take a while to grow.

“What’s wrong with the water?” Gi Jii asked.

“It’s hard to find drinkable water...”

Hmm... Gi Jii scratched his head.

“Bui! Big problem!”

It was then that Gui came running, panicked.

“The paddock has been attacked!”

The two meanings behind that sentence almost made me faint.

—209 days until the war with the humans.

Chapter 143: The Expectations of the Strong

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	72
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (The goddess)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

The paddock.

That is something we orcs came up with to ensure our continued sustenance.

We demarcate an area and build a fence around it, then we fill that area with relatively weak herbivores, giving them free rein to graze and multiply. Once they multiply, we eat the excess, giving ourselves a delicious treat while ensuring that we never ran out of food. But that’s not all. From time to time, other beasts would attack them, which we would of course have to deal with. In this way, we are able to eat not just the delicious meat of our captured beasts but also the meat of the foolish predators.

Doralia herself is quite fond of the beasts as they would eventually become nutrients for her.

Lately, I’ve been crushing the bones of the beasts before burying them by her roots. She was happiest that way, as it made it easier to absorb the nutrients.

The paddock is something I thought up with Doralia, then created in northern area of the village, away from the goblins' eyes and ears.

And yet! What is with this timing!?

I tried pulling the wool over Mr. Gi Jii, but he seemed deep in thought.

Maybe he'll keep quiet if I coax him. I have to do something or else my dream will remain but a dream! Oh, how cruel the goddess of wisdom is!

"Bui, what are we going to do!?" Gui asked.

"Gather the soldiers!" I said. "Who attacked!?"

"Wanderers! Those wanderers coming from the north!" Gui said.

Before I knew it, I had my head in my hands. As far as I knew, orcs rarely gathered in large numbers. There also shouldn't have been any big groups nearby.

There's a lot of reasons why we orcs don't gather in large numbers, like food problems or territorial problems, but regardless what the reasons were, it was indeed a rarity for orcs to gather together in a large group. The one exception being when a strong leader like Master Gol Gol was present.

Lately, a change has been happening to the northern area. For some reason I can't comprehend – maybe they were attacked by beasts and chased out of their land or something – but regardless, some orc groups have been appearing at our territory for awhile now.

"Their numbers?" I asked.

"15 orcs!" Gui said.

"Beat them! But don't kill them!" I said.

"Of course!" Gui said.

Then I turned to Mr. Gi Jii. "Mr. Gi Jii, you'll have to excuse me. In the meanwhile, please have a good rest."

"No, let me help," he said.

Oh no no no no no! You can't! You'll find out about the paddock! The northern orcs don't know anything about the fearsomeness of the goblins here,

so they won't surrender easily!

"I-It's fine! Look, it's just 15 orcs! Even we can handle that much!"

"You took care of me before. Let me use this opportunity to show you my gratitude," Gi Jii said.

What a heavy good will.

I don't need such good will! I mean, I'm happy, but show it some other time! For example, when I find myself in a pinch with that black goblin!

At this moment, the goddess of wisdom's smiling face flashed through my mind.

"Besides, didn't the king give you an important job? It wouldn't do your king well if you dallied around while doing his very important mission, right?"

A troubled expression appeared on Mr. Gi Jii's face.

"Mu... You have a point. I have to do my best for the king."

T-Thank goodness I somehow managed to convince him.

"But..." Gi Jii began to say, but I cut him before he could say a word more.

"We're really alright! Now, if you'll excuse me!"

I left Mr. Gi Jii in an almost fleeing fashion and made my way to the paddock.

By the time I arrived, the foreign orcs have already been surrounded and were being jeered at by Gui and the others.

"Whose lands do you think these are, you bastards!?"

"I'll send you lot to hell, I will!"

"You'll pay for every thing you've eaten!"

Yep, they're scary alright.

The 15 foreign orcs had already taken out their weapons. I wonder whether I should actually call out to them at times like these, but... There are goblins at the village, so I think it would be best to settle this as soon as possible.

"Gui!" I called out.

“Ah, Bui, you came,” Gui said, causing the orcs to all turn to me.

“General! General!” The orcs cried.

“Show them who’s boss, General!” Another said.

The normal orcs stomped their feet on the ground and cheered, causing the foreign orcs within their encirclement to falter. Looking closer, they could be seen sitting on their knees in seiza.

“Beat them up!” A goblin cried.

“Master Bui, embrace me!” Another said.

I feel like I heard something weird just now, but ignoring it, I approached the 15 foreign orcs.

You can do this, Bui. Don’t get nervous.

“I would like to apologize for this incident,” the leader of the foreign orcs said as he apologized.

Well, yeah, there’s not much else you can do when surrounded by a horde three times your size.

They have also been insulted for a while now, so it was only natural that they appeared weakened. In fact, they looked like they were about to cry anytime.

Personally, I’d prefer to just forgive them and forget, but that wouldn’t do. The orcs are far too impulsive. If you let them off lightly, it won’t be long before they do it again.

To avoid that, one needs to be hard and stern. If this whole thing could become a traumatic experience for them, even better. Otherwise, they’ll never listen. Especially, these warrior-type wanderers.

As I kept quiet, the surrounding orcs became even rowdier.

“How are you going to make up for this!? Are you going to feed us with your flesh!? Hah!?”

For the record, we don’t engage in cannibalism.

“But, the beasts in the north were going crazy—” The orc leader complained.

“Like we care! Pay us back for the food you stole!” The other orcs from my side demanded.

At that, the foreign orc leader’s presence became smaller and smaller until he seemed barely visible.

Just as I was thinking it was about time to wrap things up, suddenly, a shadow appeared behind the orcs sitting in seiza.

T-That’s...

“Orcs, meat,” the shadow said.

It was Hasu and his men, a fierce flame gleaming from their eyes. There were about over 70 of them all-in-all.

“K-Kobolds!?” The foreign orcs cried.

“Ahh, those... those are our general’s pets, scary pets that eat bad orcs—” The orcs from my side said.

“Let’s hear your reply,” I interjected, cutting off the previous orc.

This is bad! Mr. Hasu looks so hungry he seems about ready to pounce at any moment. I’ll be fine, but they might mistake the baby orcs for food.

To quickly wrap things, I said, “I give you two choices: One, you work in this village, or two...”

I pointed to the kobolds.

The foreign orc leader immediately replied with tearful eyes. “Master Bui, please let us serve you!”

Seeing that, I signaled Gui with my eyes.

Give meat to the kobolds!

Gui nodded in response, then he took the foreign orcs and instructed them to rebuild the broken paddock.

We have to catch the animals that escaped too.

As my head started to ache at all the problems, I headed back to the village where Mr. Gi Jii was waiting.



When Gi Jii Arsil came back with his men, he reported his findings. I listened with folded arms.

Stone walls greater than my height that stretched endlessly around the forest; and it didn't even take Gi Jii a half-day's worth of walking to reach it. That distance is a problem. It would probably be best to assume these walls to be the real deal too.

The lack of a system of measurement is a problem. I should've decided on one beforehand.

Can I still make it if I start teaching the goblins now?

Even I can only eyeball distances myself. How should I even explain what 1 meter is to them? What about numbers?

Goblins starting from rare class can count. From 1 to 10, then there's 100. Above that there's 1,000, and then there's 10,000. I should teach distance in a similar fashion.

Gi Jii managed to count up to 100 before, but he couldn't count any further.

If I use footsteps as a base, I should be able to teach the goblins about distance.

After teaching Gi Jii, I sent him out to scout again. I could go myself, but if I'm always the one doing things, I might end up hindering the goblins' growth.

Because of the upcoming war with the humans, the quality of the goblins has become an urgent issue. Because of that it would be better for me to use the goblins or even the demihumans to carry out tasks with little to no danger to them to train them.

Just physical strength and ether alone won't be enough to win a war.

Those walls the humans came up with has already gone beyond my expectations. We've taken our first steps in this war against them, but they're still far ahead of us.

To grab them by the shoulder, turn them around, and beat them black and blue... is still a long way away.

Still...

“A paddock, huh.”

Apparently, Gi Jii caught wind of the orcs building one when he dropped by. It's a good idea, I think.

Catch the relatively tame herbivores and raise them up to be – perhaps – even better than their wild counterparts, that might be aiming too high. In any case, just raising them up for food isn't a bad idea.

I should consult the beast tamers, Luther of the papirsag (shell tribe), and Gi Gi Orudo the ancient beast tamer, when they come back. For the meantime, I should send the most knowledgeable of them, Luther, to look for beasts we could put in our paddock.



“The castle walls have finally taken shape,” a calm voice said, causing the head of the carpenters to turn around.

When he did, an elderly gentleman with silver hair and combed down silver mustache filled his vision.

As soon as he saw him, the head carpenter said, “My lord!”

The fat man was about to begin buttering up to the old veteran, but a glance and a wave was all it took Gowen to stop him.

“Enough,” he said. “How is the construction proceeding?”

“Y-Yes, we've mostly completed the outer walls. The walls are 4m thick and the people can pass above the walls with no problem. As you've requested, we've installed paths throughout the facility and stocked up on spears and bows...”

Gowen looked around the castle walls as he listened to the man.

Last time they lost to the goblins. With the darkness and the forest at their side, the goblins were able to thoroughly destroy half of his army.

Gowen had spent a long time in the army, but even for him, suffering so much in the hands of the goblins was a first.

But that was precisely why he couldn't let down his guard.

The goblins they were facing were not normal. A goblin humanity has never seen before was with them. If that was truly a king class, then it was truly regrettable that he could not subjugate it that day. How strong would the goblins be in a few years? Gowen couldn't tell.

"Can't let my guard down," Gowen muttered.

"Yes...?" The head carpenter asked.

Gowen implored him to continue, then he looked up at the castle walls again and pondered.

These walls were quickly finished thanks to the magicians the king asked, and it was between these walls that the war would be held.

But if these walls were to fall... What then?

Gowen shook the impossible thought from his mind. If such a thing was indeed possible, he would have to think up a plan to counter it.

Beyond the walls were the fields, then beyond that were the very innards of this colonial city. There were gates on the western and eastern walls, leading to the western capital by road. From there, it would take about 2 days on horse.

If this place were to fall, the enemy would surely come to the western capital through those roads.

In the windy empty plains, there was no way to stop an invasion coming from the west.

Should he try fortifying the two roads? But he had no men to spare aside from those fresh recruits. There was strength in number, but enlisting too many civilians would negatively affect the tax. That would displease King Ashtal, making it an unwise plan.

What about the adventurers? It was unfortunate, but he had to restrict them for now. As much as possible, Gowen did not wish to stir the hornet's nest until he was sure he was ready.

But the outer walls were ready, weren't they? If so, then shouldn't it be fine now? Uncertain factors should certainly be kept away from the equation, but...

In that case, he should take the cowardly soldiers and attack the monsters through the plains.

A map appeared within Gowen's mind as he thought back to all the battles until now. He considered making a protective wall between the different districts of the city. He figured he should also prepare to call reinforcements from the western capital should the goblins manage to break through.

"Umm... Is there any problem, my lord?" The head carpenter fearfully asked.

"No, it's nothing. I will take a look around the walls. You may return to your post."

"Y-yes, my lord!"

As the head carpenter withdrew, Gowen walked up the walls and looked at the passages the soldiers would be passing through in case of a war.

Winds blew from the mountain ranges of the snow god, fluttering Gowen's clothes. As memories of the distant battlefield drew a smile on the old veteran's face, he muttered to himself, "I'll teach you goblins what it means to fight a war."

The western feudal lord glared at the forest, then turned heel and never looked back.

—199 days until the war with the humans.

Chapter 144: Time to Return

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	72
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (The goddess)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

“Well then...”

A white robed man gave King Ashtal a letter, and he glanced it, then nodded and handed it over to his prime minister.

“So this is the formula for potion,” the old prime minister said with great interest.

The messenger nodded. He was a young man with a tall and lean figure, but though he wore a slovenly smile on his face, his eyes were not smiling. “Please consider this as one of the wisdoms of our ivory tower. With this formula you will be able to create as many of these potions as you like.”

The prime minister turned to the messenger. “This can instantly heal wounds?”

The messenger met his gaze. “That would be praising it too much. This potion can only increase the regenerative abilities of people. It is not magic. If you need instant healing, a magician would be preferable. In fact, lately, I’ve heard

that there are skilled healers here in the country that could be hired for a large sum.”

The messenger’s sharp gaze turned to King Ashtal as well, but being king, it could not affect him.

King Ashtal smiled and chuckled. “Interesting, our country would be very interested to adopt it. Right, prime minister?”

“...Of course, Your Highness,” the prime minister agreed.

Bloody tanuki, the messenger cursed in his mind, but his smile remained unwavering.

“Now, about Lady Reshia’s return. Will one month be acceptable?” The messenger asked.

“Yes, that’ll be fine. Thanks to her holiness, the city has gotten much livelier. I am cannot overstate my gratitude to the Ivory Tower.”

“No, no, surely, this must also be a gift from the heaven’s because of his highness’ great virtue,” the messenger said as he excused himself.

“Hmph, shrewd mutt. I suppose this means they’ve seen through our intentions?” King Ashtal spat.

“We really can’t look down on them. They don’t just have influence among the bureaucrats, their intel is also superb. Your Majesty, are you truly going to hand over the saint?” The prime minister asked.

Ashtal reluctantly nodded as he leaned onto his armrest. “It can’t be helped. There’s no point in having a trump card if you never use it. It’s good timing, though. Gulland should be coming back for his regular report soon. We can have one last feast then.”

The prime minister courteously nodded and faintly smiled. “I shall send a letter to the merchants and nobles then. The saint needs to dance one last time for us, after all.”

“I’ll leave it to you then,” King Ashtal said.

At that, the prime minister withdrew, leaving King Ashtal by himself.

Reshia's return to the Ivory Tower. They have been discussing through the Ivory Tower's messengers for some time now, and finally, the day has come where they would have to hand her over. As far as King Ashtal was concerned, that so-called saint was only a girl. Exactly what was her worth?

King Ashtal did not know, but one thing was certain: the Ivory Tower wanted her safe.

"Well, whatever," he muttered.

So long as he could get what he wants.

The formula for potion. With that in their possession, King Ashtal could strengthen his army even further. With the potions and the healers together, King Ashtal's personal army would truly become a force to be reckoned with.

"I need to whittle down the nobles' influence and strengthen my own... My royal family must become stronger."

Suddenly, knocking could be heard from the other side of his office's door.

"Your Majesty, it is Ishtel. May I request an audience?"

"I don't mind. Enter."

The person that entered was a young man with a great figure. If Ashtal were younger and better trained he would look just like him.

"Grandfather!"

No sooner than the imperial guards closed the door, Ishtel ran up to Ashtal.

"Are you truly going to send Lady Reshia away?" He asked.

Ashtal wryly smiled when he saw his grandson so excited. This boy was still wet in the ears, but he was King Ashtal's sole heir.

As King Ashtal felt the warmth of his would-be successor, he made a stern face. "That was the plan from the start. She could only stay here temporarily. We can't refuse the Ivory Tower's messenger if he asks us to send her back."

"That's... That's true, but..."

"Ishtel, I understand you are fond of the saint, but..."

“E-Excuse me!? I... I couldn't possibly...”

Not even Ashtal could keep up appearances when he saw his grandson react like that.

“Ah, Ishtel, you are kind, so kind... But that kindness is something you must share equally among our people, to do otherwise is to betray our duty as kings.”

One may love, but never indulge. One may hate, but never diverge. Those are the teachings of the Germion Family that have been passed down since long ago.

“20 days later, a feast to send her off will be held. You must bid her farewell then.”

“...Yes, grandfather.”

The young prince came with great vigor, but when he left, he left with none.

“All sources of trouble shall be cut, be they from within or from outside,” King Ashtal said.

He would see to it than when he passes on his royalty to his grandchildren, it would be a peaceful one. To that end, he would have to quickly dispose of the goblins festering in the west.



“The lizardmen are on a rampage?” I asked.

The assassin, Gi Ji Arsil, had personally trained an intelligence division. One of those goblins reported before me with tottering words. Apparently, the lizardmen from around the river to the north were on a rampage and have even caused casualties among the goblins.

“Your Majesty, please give us the command to subjugate them.” The knight class, Gi Ga Rax, enthusiastically said, but I remained quiet.

I wonder if there's a way to add these lizard men to my horde? They are beasts that live by the riverside, but they're not incapable of reason. If I could add them to my horde, that would add another point to my favor in the coming war with the humans.

“Before killing, we should try talking. Summon Tanita of the long-tailed tribe,” I said.

At that, a messenger was sent to the distant demihuman village. Until then, the area where the lizardmen were rampaging was to be off-limits.

If talking doesn’t work, then we’ll kill them.

Next was a report from Kuzan.

It was about her investigation’s progress.

In the end, it seems they couldn’t figure out how far the path underground extended. I listened to Kuzan’s report with a frown.

I don’t think there are any dangerous beasts down there, but... An endless path, huh? A large path that stretches horizontally and vertically. It seems I’ll have to send more people if we are to search both ways.

The small Kuzan looked pitiful as she sighed.

According to Kuzan, the legend passed down among the goblins says that this place is the entrance to the underworld that the underworld goddess herself had sealed. But that’s all we know.

I ordered Kuzan, who was feeling down, to prioritize the search in the first level.

“As you will, Your Majesty!”

This search’s purpose is mainly to find out whether there are other entrances to the basement or not. There could be a path leading to the human world, after all. While it’s true that we could simply leave the forest the normal way, having just one path out would limit our options. Besides, why go the normal way and do as the humans expect?

That aside, I can’t settle down for some reason.

The days have been passing with me receiving reports and sanctioning new orders. It seems I’ve built up stress because of that. It seems a goblin’s body really does need to move from time to time.

Because of that I decided to take a peek at Gi Ga and Gi Jii’s training.

Taking my great sword with me, I got off my throne and headed to the plaza, where the normal goblins trained.

“My lord,” Gi Jii said.

“Your Majesty,” Gi Ga said.

Gi Ga trained the young goblins to become warriors, while Gi Jii trained the warriors to become soldiers.

Gi Jii’s training would start with three-man cells, then Gi Jii would put several three-man cells to form one unit, a kentor. After that, he would put several kentors together to form one unit, a regiol.

The rare-class goblins were the ones who usually led the kentors, while the noble goblins led the regions.

Apparently, this was something Gi Jii figured out after consulting with Pale, a method to make the army operate faster.

“If that’s how you’re going to do it, then you might as well name them all,” I said.

“Name them?” Gi Ga asked with wide eyes.

“For example, the Yubu Regiol,” I said.

“I see... Then, by all means, my lord. Please pick out some names,” Gi Jii said.

Huh, me!?

Gi Jii looked at me with curious eyes. I know I was the one who suggested it, but...

“Hmm, let’s pick out names when everyone has returned,” I said.

“...Very well, my lord. Let’s do that then,” Gi Jii said, somewhat dejectedly.

What was he expecting?

Like this, the days passed with happiness and satisfaction. The fact that we were steadily progressing toward our goal filled me with satisfaction, and I was able to get a good night’s rest.

/■、saw.....■Ah、—Saw.....

Voices of jubilation that I should have forgotten long ago resounded within my ears, though to me, they were really nothing more than something to hate.

The distant memories of my humanity that I've already forgotten surfaced a little and then vanished again.

Was I really once human?

Maybe I was always a goblin, and these memories are nothing more than a clutch I used to explain these incomprehensible and vague knowledge I was born with?

In truth, I—

—In the darkness, I opened my eyes.

“Gu, ...”

In front of me was the ceiling of the Fortress of the Abyss that I should have long gotten used to.

Wiping my sweat with my damp hands, I shook my head.

“I am the king. I am he who shall become the king of monsters...”

Nothing more, nothing less...

At least, that's how it should be.



“It's been a while, Lady Reshia.”

When Reshia heard that familiar voice, she turned around with Gastra in her arms.

“Lord Rolika? What are you doing here?”

What would an acquaintance from the Ivory Tower be doing here? Reshia wondered, though her emotionless expression never broke.

The tall and lean figure that was Lord Rolika courteously bowed. “At the whims of the white elders, I have been tasked with escorting you back.”

“...Isn't that saying too much?” Reshia frowned in a way that made it hard to understand her expression.

In response, Rolika continued to smile that slovenly smile of his, while his eyes never did. “Oh? And here I thought it was a splendid answer. As usual, it is difficult to understand you.”

Rolika looked at her in a way that was akin to someone observing a test subject, a cold, emotionless gaze, though his smile never left his lips. It was unnerving to say the least.

“The ‘whim’ part was a joke, but I really was tasked to escort you back. Lady Reshia, please return to the Ivory Tower. Everyone is worried about you.”

“...Worried about my seal?”

“Oh? Oho oho? You’ve become a lot easier to understand than before. Such a childish response is disappointing to hear. That simply won’t do, lady Reshia. You must be more complicated...”

As Rolika mumbled, he suddenly appeared before Reshia without a sound and grabbed Reshia by the arm.

Sensing Reshia’s apprehension, Gastra began growling, but Rolika looked into Reshia’s eyes all the same as if nothing was amiss.

“Was it the great hero, Gulland, who changed you? Or was there someone in this kingdom that managed to move your heart?”

The tall Rolika looked at her from above, his slit for eyes opening, revealing an ecstatic expression. It was a crazed expression no one would expect from the usually composed Rolika.

Marked desire twisted Rolika’s face.

“Aren’t you simply misunderstanding?” Reshia asked.

Rolika looked at her eyes for a moment, and after ascertaining that her eyes were unwavering, he shook his head and his expression went back to normal.

“Hmm, that’s odd... Maybe it’s because you were always locked in here with no one to talk to, so you’ve become worse at talking.”

Rolika Ralmera, the clairvoyant, a researcher student at the Ivory Tower.

“...And? When will I be departing?” Reshia asked.

“One month later. You’ll have to endure then. Do take care not to lose heart.”

“I understand,” Reshia said in a dismissive way.

Rolika complacently smiled back and withdrew, and Reshia held Gastra tightly.

“I’ve changed...”

Gastra meekly cried out of worry for his master.

“If that is true, then...”

It could only mean that she has seen he who will fight fate. His body was that of a monster’s, but his will was greater than any other’s; a will so great it would not tremble even before the gods themselves.

To the followers of fate, there was nothing more fearful than his existence.

Through the will of the gods, the paths have been laid out. From the moment of birth, to the moment of death, everything was decided long ago. That is the correct order of the world.

But the king did not fail to reach her in time because of fate. That result was not due to fate but her own cowardice.

Something like that isn’t fate!

If the gods have chosen a path, then it is only human to go against it.

She has always been pondering to herself, but now that Rolika has appeared, she knew what she had to do.

“Let’s go back... to the Ivory Tower.”

—192 days until the war with the humans.

Intermission: Gi Gi’s Beast Horde 2

Status	
Name	Gi Gi Orudo
Race	Goblin

Level	35
Class	Noble
Possessed Skills	Track; Throw Projectile; Axe Mastery C-; Sloppy Eater; Jeer; Tacit Understanding; Ancient Beast Tamer; Beast Trainer; Cooperation; Friend of the Horde; Bug Eater
Divine Protection	None
Attributes	None
Tamed Beasts	Triple Head

After leading a great horde of beasts and capturing a village, the ancient beast tamer, Gi Gi Orudo, looked at the surrounding beasts and sighed.

“Woof?” The thorn dog, a dog-like beast with thorn-like fur, was puzzled to see Gi Gi feeling down. It was small for a male, but it had three large females for its wives and had many children rolling around by its legs.

“Guego!” The big eye, a bird with richly colored feathers arranged in a way that drew the shape of an eye, sang a courting song to cheer Gi Gi up.

That courting song attracted the male big eye, causing it to spread its wings and begin dancing.

The mirage, a monkey that could blend with its surroundings, jumped up, wondering what was going on, but when it saw that it was just the big eye, it went back to sleep with its wife.

The thorn fox’s thorn-like fur stood up for a moment when the thorn fox thought there was danger, but when it noticed that the everything was fine, it looked toward Gi Gi with its wife.

The young dragon turtle was only about 1m big at the moment, but it is said that their kind could eventually grow up to 5m. The dragon turtle’s children were resting upon its shell, so to keep from waking them up, it didn’t even move an inch and only looked at Gi Gi.

“Why...”

After occupying the goblin village, Gi Gi finally managed to get some help in taking care of his beasts, greatly lessening his work, but for some reason, no

woman would approach him.

There were certainly female goblins within the village and it was not like he had any problems finding a female companion back in the Gi Village.

Gi Gi wasn't a fool; he knew very well why no one approached him.

The reason why he muttered out that 'why' just now was not because he did not understand his predicament but because he had no way of solving it.

Being surrounded by such a terrifying horde, it was no wonder that even the goblin females were too terrified to approach him. And Gi Gi himself was too proud, being a goblin noble, to actually force a woman to be with him.

Goblin women were supposed to approach the men on their own accord. At the very least, that's what Gi Gi believed.

Why did he have to be the one to approach them? Gi Gi thought to himself as he sighed again.

But it was also true that there was no fulfillment in being buried by beast's feathers like this.

Gi Gi Orudo had been spending his days, looking for new beasts to add to his horde, procuring food to feed them, and studying the nearby terrain, yet all the while he was being anguished.

Each time he went to scout, his beasts would follow him out of love.

They would follow their beloved master wherever he went, be it the cruel battlefield, the fiery volcanic region, or the beaches and its salty air, the one exception being the marshlands.

Gi Gi was worrying endlessly as he thought of his next course of action.

The order he had received from the king was to strengthen the goblins.

When he thought about it, it seemed he was given plenty of freedom to do as he pleased. With nothing to do, he had driven away the orcs, added the beasts he liked to his horde, and he even taught the goblins of this village how to take care of the beasts and fight together as three-man cells.

Gi Gi has also had many plants planted in the area to ensure that his horde of

beasts was well fed.

But these things were not enough to console Gi Gi.

What Gi Gi truly wanted was to go back to the village. As soon as he realized that, it didn't take him long to resolve himself to return.

"Since I have decided, I should hurry," Gi Gi said.

The moment he decided to return to the Fortress of the Abyss, he acted.

"We are going to the headquarters!" Gi Gi declared after gathering the goblins of the village.

The goblins looked at each other while the thorn dogs howled, calling their brethren to them.

They started preparing to return the very next day. The scale of the gathered beast horde was nothing to scoff at.

Aside from the beasts that were usually with him: the thorn dogs, the mirages, the thorn foxes, the big eyes, and the dragon turtles; there were also the birdcats who were unsuited for war, the moles that fed on soil, the earth crabfishes that would use their scissor arms to cut grassroots before eating them, the stone crabs that would mimic stones when threatened, and the feather rabbits that would quickly run using their wings.

"Unu..."

Even Gi Gi was taken aback when he saw the great horde gathering before him, but when he thought about it, that just meant that his horde had gotten that much stronger.

Suddenly, Gi Gi felt happy about himself, as it seemed he would be able to give a good report to the king.

3 days after Gi Gi had announced that they would be returning, they started to make their way to the Fortress of the Abyss.

As Gi Gi led the horde on the back of his triple head, a long line of beasts could be seen following from behind.

Within that long line of beasts were a relatively paltry number of goblins

pulling the beasts. To these goblins, Gi Gi's orders were absolute, so they did not hesitate to carry out this great migration.

The goblins piled up what little treasure they had on the backs of the dragon turtles as they headed south. As they made their way, they found the southern lands to be a peaceful land with no powerful beasts to threaten them.

From time to time, they would happen across some spear deer or some giant spiders, but aside from those, there were no beasts worthy of note.

But then suddenly, their march came to a halt.

Gi Gi had ordered them to stop.

"Was there a cave in a place like this?" Gi Gi asked to the rare class goblin who was the former boss of the village.

"Well..." the goblin didn't seem to know.

"Hmm... There's a smell coming from inside that has me curious," Gi Gi said.

"It feels like we're being invited," the rare class goblin said, causing Gi Gi to think it wiser to back off, but then sounds of footsteps approached from the cave.

"Is someone there?" Gi Gi asked as he ordered the triple head to back off.

Then a voice called out from the direction of the cave. "Long time no see, Gi Gi."

It was a familiar voice, causing Gi Gi to blink. "That voice... Lord Gi Go Amatsuki!?"

Gi Go Amatsuki, the goblin swordsman who asked to be exiled. He looked different from before. His once blue skin was now brown, and a lone horn stretched for the heavens from his forehead. He was also much bigger than Gi Gi recalled.

"...You've gotten stronger?" Gi Gi asked.

"Yes, as the king has shown," Gi Go said.

"Mr. Gi Go, I keep telling you not to leave... Woah!?"

The pressure emanating from Gi Go, who had his arms folded, was so great it

caused the beasts behind Gi Gi to shake. As Gi Go and Gi Gi were talking, Yoshu finally came out of the cave and was understandably shocked to see Gi Gi's horde.

"That's quite a horde you have there," Gi Go said.

"You've changed a lot too, Lord Gi Go. If you are planning on returning, how about coming with us?" Gi Gi offered.

"Unfortunately, I have yet to accomplish my goal. You'll have to forgive me."

"I see..."

After thinking for a while, Gi Gi decided to hand Gi Go a bag full of plant seeds and the evening primrose he found in the marshlands a while ago.

"I don't know if these will be of some use to you, but I gathered a lot of edible seeds to feed my beast horde. I think that human with you might be able to put these to good use. Please take it."

Gi Go considered it for awhile, then he gladly accepted.

"Thank you, but are you sure?" He asked.

"I have this beast horde to give to the king, so this is all I can give to you," Gi Gi said.

"You're a good man," Gi Go said.

They exchanged a few more words after that, then Gi Go Amatsuki and Gi Gi Orudo parted ways. Gi Go headed north, while Gi Gi headed back to the Fortress of the Abyss.

"It seems I will be able to bring good news to his highness," Gi Gi Orudo happily smiled as he kicked his triple head and rode back home.



Gi Gi's level has risen.

36 => 40

Chapter 145: Gi Gi’s Return

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	72
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (The goddess)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

“Hmm... I guess it really was too much to expect things to go well the first time,” I said with folded arms at the scenery before me.

We cultivated the land around the Fortress of the Abyss and tried planting some Praya (red fruit seed), but the end result was that all the crops died.

Just three days after we planted the seed, the seeds already started to bud, so I was pretty hopeful, but then five days later, everything died.

“Do you know the cause?” I asked the fearful demihuman inspector, at which he answered timidly that he did not know.

“I see,” I said.

I don’t know anything about farming in this world, so I can’t give any advice, but at the very least, we should try figure out what factors caused this failure.

“In any case, let’s go one step at a time and try to figure out what factor caused this time’s failure,” I said.

“Factor?” The demihuman asked.

“Yes. Perhaps it was the soil that caused the seeds to die, perhaps it was the lack of nutrients, perhaps it was water, or perhaps it was the climate. What matters most now is that we find which one or which ones are responsible for this failure.”

“I see...”

“I’ll leave the rest to you.”

At that, I left the demihuman and received the report of the goblins I’d sent out to scout the lizardmen. As it turns out, the lizardmen have gotten even rowdier.

It seems it was worth summoning Tanita, after all.

“Gi Ga Rax! Gather the young goblins and lead them!” I ordered.

“As you command!”

The moment Tanita arrived, I had the young goblins come with us as we accompanied the rizarlat to the rampaging lizardmen. Of course, the reason the young goblins were with us was to give them experience.

When I was a young goblin, I had to search for my own food. They should be able to handle this much. Also, to be safe, I had the ‘injured’ goblins accompany the loyal Gi Ga.

We weren’t in any rush, so along the way, we took the opportunity to teach the young goblins how to hunt.

“I can smell the scent of our brethren. This...” Tanita said before becoming speechless.

“The lake seems to have changed,” I said.

“Hmm... I do recall it being a bit bigger than this,” Gi Ga Rax agreed.

The water pouring from upstream must have lessened. If not, well, something must have caused the water of the lake to lessen.

“—GUGlaa!”

Suddenly, a piercing shriek erupted and several lizardman jumped out of the

mud and crawled toward us.

I took the young goblins and hid them behind me, while Gi Ga Rax and the injured goblins stepped out.

“Ruu—, uRURUuu—, Ru, Ru—!”

But then Tanita suddenly made some strange noises, and then his two heads glanced alternatively between us and the lizardmen, keeping us from fighting.

“Your Majesty...” Gi Ga called out.

I told him to stand alert.

Tanita seemed to be in the middle of persuading them. In that case, as the ones who invited him, we have the duty to see this through the end.

“At least, so long as the young ones aren’t hurt,” I told Gi Ga before turning my eyes back to Tanita.

Should negotiations fail, we have more than enough to wipe them out.

The twin-headed double-tailed chief of the long tailed tribe looked straight at the mud-smeared lizardmen.

“I hail from the west, I am the chief of the household of mud and rain. Bring out your chief,” Tanita said quietly but authoritatively.

The lizardmen could only look at each other in response, however. After a while, Tanita’s right head finally lost its patience and yelled. “Short tailed ones, I am telling you that we cannot talk unless your chief comes!”

In his anger, Tanita’s two tails slammed on the ground, frightening the lizardmen back into the lake. Tanita’s glare never left them as they swam away.

After a while, a conspicuously bigger lizard man crawled out of the lake. When he saw Tanita, he fell on his knees and bowed his head.

“...Warrior of hardened skin, brave warrior of two tails, it is my honor to meet you. I am Biddo, child of the large tail, Deddo.”

The lizardman, who proclaimed himself as Biddo, placed his curved sword and shield on the ground as he bowed to Tanita. The other lizardmen followed suit and knelt.

I breathed a sigh of relief upon seeing that they could be reasoned with.

“Child of the large tail, Deddo, Biddo, it is a pleasure to meet you. Do you know why I’ve come?” Tanita asked.

“I am uncertain,” Biddo said, glancing at us then bowing again. “I find it doubtful that the great warrior, Lord Tanita, could have come because of the goblins.”

Doubtful, huh. I wryly smiled.

“...Child of the large tail, Deddo, Biddo... Presently, the goblins are like the body of the god of fire that chases after the night god.”

“Surely, you jest. They are goblins. Nothing more, nothing less.”

The lizardman looked toward us again.

“I swear on my two tails, I speak the truth,” Tanita said.

Immediately, a look of shock was painted on Biddo’s face, and the lizardmen behind him looked at each other.

“I have come here today at their request to mediate between you and them,” Tanita said.

Biddo was frozen still, but Tanita continued.

“Will you accept the decision we have made?” Tanita asked.

“I... will accept the decision of the famed twin-head double-tailed Lord Tanita, but... I must first see for myself, with my own eyes, the truth! I would like to challenge the goblins to a duel!”

Tanita breathed out in resignation and looked toward me.

Normally, this would be the queue for me to enter, but the young goblins were here, so I figured it would be a good opportunity to have Gi Ga show off.

“Gi Ga Rax!” I called out.

“Yes, Your Majesty!” He said.

“My faithful knight, first spearman of the goblins! Can you win against that warrior?” I asked.

“If it is his highness’ command, then by all means!”

“Then go!”

“I have received his majesty’s command.”

And so, Gi Ga Rax rode with dignity on blacktigerback to face the lizardman chief.

With a great voice, he bellowed out. “I am Gi Ga Rax! First of the king’s subordinates, first among the goblins in the art of the spear. Your courage to see our strength is admirable! Come as you please!”

In response the lizardman stepped forward and bellowed back. “You can talk, goblin! My name is Biddo! Child of the large tail, Deddo, Biddo!”

Wielding a large curved sword and a round shield, Biddo swung his blade overhead and pointed at Gi Ga.

“The gods oversee all duels, let there be no ill will no matter the result. I, the twin-headed double-tailed Tanita, shall be your referee,” Tanita said.

“Just as I wished!” Biddo said.

“Of course!” Gi Ga said.

The moment the word ‘Start’ resounded, Gi Ga and Biddo’s fight began.

Sparks erupted as Gi Ga’s spear met Biddo’s curved sword. The reach advantage belonged to Gi Ga’s iron spear, but the lizardman was so skilled he could bridge that gap with ease. A powerful foe.

After clashing weapons 8 times, Gi Ga took some distance. He has gotten much better at handling his steed. I might be biased, but I feel his riding is good enough to stand with the best of Paradua.

Gi Ga’s masterful riding coupled with his exceptional spear techniques left Biddo with no opportunity to strike back. Gradually, Biddo’s breath grew ragged, but Gi Ga was as calm as ever as he waited for an opening.

The difference in strength was steadily becoming apparent.

“Take this!”

Gi Ga swung his spear with his long arm, then bolting off with his steed, he

rushed toward the lizardman. Everything happened so quickly that Biddo couldn't respond in time, the most he could do was to bring back his sword in hopes of defending, but unfortunately for him, Gi Ga's spear landed so heavily on his sword that he was forced to retreat. Gi Ga would not let him, however.

Without even stopping to breathe, Gi Ga let loose three thrusts toward the lizardman. The lizardman somehow managed to block them, but his form was clearly about to break.

Gi Ga let loose one last attack.

The tip of his spear cut Biddo's legs, causing him to lose his momentum, and in the next moment, Gi Ga sent Biddo's curved sword flying.

"Gu, Nu..." Biddo groaned as Gi Ga pointed his spear at him.

The lizardmen stood frozen still as they watched their chief lose.

"The duel is decided!" Tanita declared as he waved his hands.

After that, the lizardmen agreed not to attack the goblins any more and I invited Biddo to visit the Fortress of the Abyss, so we can deepen our relations. Like this we managed to stabilize the area near the fortress.

I asked Biddo why the water level of the lake had suddenly plummeted, and apparently, this happens once a year, after which, a fierce winter would follow. When I heard that, I learned for the first time that this world has seasons.

Gradually, the seasons changed, and the god of time's changing countenance charmed me.

Beyond this winter, what awaits us is the war with the humans.

I must gather enough strength by then.

The ancient beast tamer, Gi Gi Orudo, had at long last returned from his trip to the north with a great horde of beasts. We almost ended up fighting with the goblins he brought, but fortunately, Gi Ga managed to name himself before anything happened.

“Welcome back,” I said, my great sword in hand.

Gi Gi bowed. Behind him was a small horde of goblins and an uncountable beast horde. Never in my wildest dreams did I think he would come back with a great horde of beasts.

Well, I can add them to the army, all the same.

Rewarding and punishing is one of the basics of building a country, so I had to reward Gi Gi for a job well done.

“Gi Gi Orudo, the ancient beast tamer, I hereby permit you to build your village northwest of the Fortress of the Abyss. Take your fellow beast tamers with you and build a village there.”

“As his majesty wills!”

After seeing him nod, I informed him of the earlier events.

“When the war with the humans begin, I shall leave one front of the war with you. Train your beast tamers and your beasts with that purpose in mind. You have done well, Gi Gi Orudo.”

“My deepest thanks, Your Majesty!”

Gi Gi seemed nervous to be commended in front of the goblins.

There was still time until the war with the humans. If he raised his beasts well and trained up his rare beast tamers, Gi Gi’s horde should become a force to be reckoned with.

That’s something I’ll be looking forward to.

Still... It sure is surprising to see so many different beasts together in one place without fighting. I guess that in and of itself is a testament to Gi Gi’s skill.

I’ll have to give him a fitting land, so that he’ll be able to spread his wings to their fullest.

Speaking of which, since he brought this many beasts back with him, I wonder if this’ll have some sort of effect on the ecosystem of the north? After all, he didn’t just bring herbivores back with him, he even brought back carnivores like the thorn dogs.

If anything, it would be more surprising if the ecosystem of the north doesn't get affected. Just to be safe, I should have Gi Ji send some scouts to monitor the north.

Now, with Gi Gi back, I wonder how Gi Gu Verbena and the others are doing.

I hope they're doing well...



After the sylph unification war, the elves were busy repairing their villages. Starting with the burned forest of Sinfall, the elves buried their dead and gathered the weapons and armor made of blue silver steel to prevent them from negatively affecting the forest.

They also mended their relationship with the demihumans, improving the lifestyle of the demihumans that were turned into slaves. Because of all these, the new chief of the sage's council, Shure Forni, had a mountain of documents sitting on his desk.

"Here are the population for the different villages," Fei said as he handed over a document.

Shure glanced over at that document, and then imposed work according to the population of each village. The demihumans were unconditionally released from their slavery, so voices of complaints rose from the defeated villages. Warriors had to be sent out to quell them.

"You sure are in high spirits," Old Falun, Shure's sworn friend and teacher, said.

"Well, the elderly did retire too early," Shure sarcastically said.

Falun laughed. "Don't you know? A man should work hard while he's yet young."

Shure sighed as he took a sip from the herb tea Fei had made for him.

"Anyway, I came because of those goblins you sent me," Falun said.

"Is there a problem?" Shure asked.

The two shaman goblins, Gi Za Zakuend and Gi Do Buruga, had stayed behind

in the elven village because they wanted to study. Presently, they were being taught how to read and write by Falun in the great village of Gastair to the west.

“Oh, no, none at all. I am a teacher, after all. Regardless what race a person comes from, if they want to learn, I’ll happily oblige,” Falun said.

“I thought you didn’t like homeworks?” Shure asked.

“Well, yes, I’d rather hand out homeworks than have homeworks handed to me,” Falun said in a roundabout way, causing Shure to smile.

When Shure remembered the past, he couldn’t help but wryly smile. The fact that he could wryly smile like that just went to show how long it had been.

“Anyway, Shure,” Falun said, causing Shure to raise his brows.

He was familiar with Falun’s ways, being his sworn friend and student, so he knew that when Falun acted like this, he was up to no good. At the very least, it wasn’t something that could be considered ‘good’ as far as Shure was concerned.

“I was thinking of reviving the old school house,” Falun said.

There used to be an elven school, but the lack of funds forced it to close. Now, Falun was saying that he wanted it brought back.

They certainly had more funds at present. After all, the hidden treasures of Jirad were all being brought to light because of all the arguments on who exactly was to blame for the elves’ defeat.

Bringing back the school was certainly possible.

“The foundation of a country is education. I have always believed this, Shure,” Falun said.

The higher the educational standard, the more efficient the management of the country. Now that the elves were unified, it was only right that they took this as an opportunity to raise up the standards of education.

The powerful race of goblins to the east have already started to prosper, and their growth shows no signs of halting. The coming war between them and the humans would surely propel them even further.

What of the elves then?

Should they throw their lot with the humans and wipe out the goblins from the face of the world?

Or should they throw their lot with the goblins and defeat the humans?

Or should they pick neither side and look for their own path? Or perhaps pick both and remain in either race's good graces?

They were currently allied with the goblins, but it remained to be seen whether the goblins could be trusted. If the Goblin King were to die, how would the goblins react? What would they do?

The current alliance was something that was being held together solely by the friendship between Shure and the Goblin King.

"...The one to decide is you, Shure, but no matter which path you choose, you will need strength," Falun said.

"Your words ring true, elder," Shure said.

Whichever side he picked, he would need to gather the elves' strength.

At the same time, he would need to ensure that he makes allies.

That is to say that he needed to raise people with similar values.

One method to go about things was to share their knowledge and values with the intellectual among the goblins, and then send them back as skilled bureaucrats to the goblins.

The elven school was once a great village itself, but it was mainly a system to teach the children of the chiefs of the small villages a peaceful mindset.

When Shure thought of it, that was certainly a clever method. By studying together and instilling similar values, they would be able to carry out a so-called 'peaceful attack'.

"Good plan," Shure said.

Falun happily nodded. "I'll leave the details to you then."

"...Huh?" Shure thought he misheard for a moment, but when he turned to Falun, the old elf was gone.

“...He got me,” Shure said as he stifled the unspeakable expletives that demanded to gush out of his mouth.

Shure started working on the documents at his desk again.

A good night’s sleep was a long way away.

—185 days until the war with the humans.

Intermission: Gi Zu’s Duel Record II

Status	
Name	Gi Zu Ruo
Race	Goblin
Level	15
Class	Noble
Possessed Skills	Overpowering Howl; Throw Projectile; Spear Mastery B-; Instant Kill; Mad Shishi; Bite
Divine Protection	Mad God
Attributes	None

The noble goblin that had a large wound extending from its shoulder to its chest grabbed another normal goblin and threw him at Gi Zu.

Gi Zu dodged the goblin even as spears were thrust at him, then – just as the name Mad Shishi implied – he forced his way through.

When the noble class goblin saw that, he threw another normal goblin at Gi Zu.

“The same trick won’t work again!” Gi Zu changed grips on his spear to a backhand and threw it at the normal goblin.

The spear flew through the air and collided with the goblin, piercing through it, dead.

With his spear gone, Gi Zu’s innate brutality and battle instincts finally showed their true colors.

Onwards!

Rusted sword, clubs, sharpened wood for spears... All sorts of weapon slammed into Gi Zu, but he was unrelenting. He charged single-mindedly forward.

“GURUuuOOAAA!”

The fire raging within seemed to have possessed Gi Zu, as even his small wounds started gushing out blood.

Dyed in red, Gi Zu took the head of the normal goblin blocking his way and crushed it, then he broke the arm of a rare class goblin and kicked him away.

A spear came thrusting for him, but Gi Zu slipped through it and bit the neck of another rare class goblin.

“Hii—”

Without even the time to cry, the throat of the rare class goblin was torn apart. The gushing blood bathed Gi Zu’s whole body in another layer of red as he smiled fiercely, his sharp fangs showing.

“Who else shall I bore my fangs into!?” Gi Zu provokingly said as he took a step forward.

After Gi Zu tore apart the neck of a rare class goblin with his fangs, he took the dismembered head of the goblin and threw it toward the noble goblin, who watched the whole thing dazed.

The noble goblin tried to sweep away the head, but then Gi Zu suddenly bolted for him with terrifying speed.

“Wh—”

“GURUuuOOAA!”

With his howl, Gi Zu slammed his fist into the noble goblin, launching the goblin that was even bigger than Gi Zu himself a good distance away.

Yet Gi Zu did not stop.

“Pick yourself up and stand!” Gi Zu demanded. “Or are you going to make me beat someone while he’s lying on the ground!?”

Gi Zu ran toward the noble goblin and used his whole body’s strength to slam

his fist at the noble goblin as he tried to pick himself up.

Each time Gi Zu swung his fists, the face of the goblin changed and Gi Zu's bones broke, but Gi Zu never stopped beating the noble class goblin.

"GAH, GUAH, HII!"

It was a violence so bloodcurdling the surrounding area even appeared to become hazy. Gi Zu used his overwhelming strength to beat the noble class goblin senseless.

Because of the divine protection of the Mad God, Gi Zu would lose himself and stop feeling pain whenever he was bathed in the blood of his brethren.

"S, ave— please," the noble goblin tried to beg, but only an endless flurry of fists were there to answer him.

Gi Zu kept beating the noble class goblin until he lost consciousness. When he finally stopped, he looked around him. The goblins around no longer had the will to fight.

The only thing that reflected on their eyes now was the embodiment of violence that was Gi Zu.

The sight of Gi Zu suppressing his enemy with nothing more than his bare fists was so violent that it struck fear in the hearts of these goblins.

"Let it be known, from now on, this village belongs to I, Gi Zu Ruo. If there is any of you in disagreement, step forward!"

Gi Zu waved his blood stained hands at the surrounding goblins, but only prostrated heads and shrinking figures responded to his call. No one wished to fight anymore.



It was now the eighth day since Gi Zu had taken over the village of that noble goblin, and Gi Zu was not happy. Ever since that day, the noble class who was supposed to be Gi Zu's equal was so scared of him that he would always cower whenever they met. Meanwhile, the normal goblins would immediately prostrate themselves the moment Gi Zu made so much as an eek.

Gi Zu sat on the ground with his hand on his head and quietly complained to

himself.

“This isn’t what I wanted...” He said.

He shouldn’t have let go of the spear.

It was unthinkable for Gi Ga’s number one disciple to let go of the spear. Because of that he even ended up fighting like a beast, just like he used to. No, in fact, he fought even more savagely than in the past.

“I can’t become like Lord Gi Ga like this.”

The mad shishi, Gi Zu Ruo, wanted to become like Gi Ga Rax, a goblin who was feared and respected. The goblins might fear him now, but no one respected him.

In the end, Gi Zu couldn’t come up with an answer. He had to continue his mission like this.

“Then again, I am not Lord Gi Ga.”

It was impossible to become him from the start.

“Hey,” Gi Zu called out to the noble goblin.

“Ah, yes,” the noble goblin said with his head lowered.

First, Gi Zu would give the goblins a name. He couldn’t possibly call them with ‘hey’ forever, could he? If he did that he would be putting the great king’s teachings to waste.

“I’m thinking of giving you a name,” Gi Zu said.

“A name? Is that edible?” The goblin asked, puzzled.

Gi Zu shook his head and reprimanded him. “To receive a name is to receive honor from the king.”

“Honor, you say,” the goblin said.

The goblin still didn’t understand, so Gi Zu had no choice but to patiently explain.

“The king bestows a name upon us, and with it we receive things different from goblins without.”

Gi Zu was not good at explaining. But that was a given, after all, he had always been the type to prefer action over words.

“In other words, by receiving a name, one receives honor, which allows one to eat more?” The goblin asked.

“Yes,” Gi Zu nodded.

Gi Zu felt like something was off, but he wasn’t wrong.

The noble goblin called out to his subordinates. “Hey, you bastards. Go thank pops! He’s going to give us names! Receive it with gratitude!”

These goblins referred to Gi Zu as ‘Pops’. Well, whatever, he thought. As long as they didn’t call him king, anything was fine. He didn’t really get it, though. After all, he wasn’t exactly their parent, now was he?

It was probably their custom. Either way, Gi Zu didn’t bother asking.

“I shall give you a part of the name that the king has given me. You shall be Zu Vet.”

“Hehe!” Zu Vet deeply bowed with satisfaction.

Gi Zu named the two remaining rare goblins as well. There used to be four, but Gi Zu killed two, so there were only two left.

“You shall be Zu Bi. You shall be Zu Bo,” Gi Zu said.

The two rare class goblins danced to show their happiness.

“Uncle, I’m Zu Bi!”

“Uncle, I’m Zu Bo!”

Gi Zu watched the goblins dance with satisfaction, then he spoke to Zu Vet about his plans to conquer his next village.

“Vet, have you been gathering food?” Gi Zu asked.

“Yes, the three-man cell you taught us really helped. We should be able to gather the food soon...” Zu Vet said.

“I am not great, the king is,” Gi Zu corrected.

“I see. The king is great,” Zu Vet said.

Zu Vet didn't seem serious when he said that, but Gi Zu didn't blame him. After all, they had never met the king. It was only natural that they couldn't understand his greatness.

When Gi Zu came here, the most surprising thing he noted was the fact that the goblins were raising Noro Bison, a kind of livestock with long fur covering its whole body and two horns protruding from its head toward the sky.

"Those guys were caught by the guy who made the village. They're really convenient, so we figured we'd put them to use. Besides, they can be eaten too if the need shows itself," Zu Vet said.

It seems it was the same goblin that left that scar on Vet.

"It's a pity that a warrior's life was lost," Gi Zu said.

He was probably a skilled beast tamer, Gi Zu thought. He might have been able to get along with Lord Gi Gi.

"Really?" Zu Vet asked.

Gi Zu nodded, then he asked Zu Vet to have the nearby goblin villages scouted. Goblins sent out would sometimes not come back, but when he asked Zu Vet about it, he just said that it was normal.

"There are mindless giants (Gigantopitecus) and ogres nearby, and giant hammer cows (enboro) in the fields, so..." Zu Vet explained.

But Gi Zu had never heard those names before. "What are those?"

"Oh, right, you came from the north. The gigantopitecus is a monster twice my size. There's no fighting it, only running," Zu Vet said.

Zu Vet was already twice Gi Zu's size, though he was still a little smaller than the king, he was undoubtedly big; if the gigantopitecus were twice his size, it would be a monster comparable to an ogre.

"As for ogre..." Zu Vet was about to say.

"That one I know. Our king hunted them," Gi Zu said.

"Ho? Well, that's something," Zu Vet said.

Zu Vet couldn't imagine a goblin ever hunting an ogre, but he didn't dare

doubt Gi Zu's words. It wasn't right to doubt someone he looked up to like a father.

"Indeed," Gi Zu said. "What about that enboro?"

"The enboro live in the plains with axe-like horns... They're fast and they'll come chasing as soon as they spot us."

"Hmm..."

Gi Zu folded his arms and considered which prey would please the king the most.

"Do you know where the gigantopitecus and the ogres live?" Gi Zu asked.

"...No, but they usually prowl the forest, so..." Zu Vet answered despite feeling something was off.

"Then I'll challenge the enboro," Gi Zu said.

"Pops! I won't say anything bad, but it's really dangerous!" Zu Vet pleaded.

"Nope! I'm doing it! How could I ever face the king if I left a strong prey alone!" Gi Zu proudly said.

Zu Vet could only watch, dumbfounded, as Gi Zu left.

"Is pops insane!?" Zu Vet asked.

But he couldn't leave him alone as his follower, even if he has been abandoned by his real parents.

"Hey, you bastards!"

Resolving himself, Vet stood up and called to the goblins of the village.

"Pops is hunting the enboro! We're going after him!"

The goblins cried as soon as the word 'enboro' got out, but he slapped them and forced them up, then he took the goblins and chased after Gi Zu.

In one of the plains that dotted the forest, where the winds blew against the tall grasses that reached up one's knees and the forest could no longer be seen...

“Pops, won’t you reconsider it?” Zu Vet asked.

“Reconsider what? I’m challenging that thing, you just stay put and watch,” Gi Zu said stubbornly, causing Zu Vet to almost faint.

“So, which one is the enboro?” Gi Zu asked.

“That one... That big one,” Zu Vet said, pointing to a conspicuously big cow over 3 meters tall.

“That one, huh,” Gi Zu fiercely smiled in a way that revealed his fangs.

When Zu Vet and the others saw that, they couldn’t help but twitch.

“You guys wait here. If I die, send a messenger to the north,” Gi Zu said.

“Pops!” Zu Vet cried.

“Tell the king that his warrior, Gi Zu Ruo, has died,” Gi Zu said, then he took his spear and ran toward the enboro.

Gi Zu had run with all his might and thrust his spear, but the most he could do was wound the legs of the enboro. The enboro had managed to dodge in time.

“BAGOooOOA!” The enboro was filled with rage when it realized that its legs were wounded and it seized Gi Zu.

The pressure emanating from the enboro was nothing to scoff at, especially up close. Strong horns like hammers, a thick neck that supported them, and four sculpted limbs.

A smile appeared on Gi Zu’s lips as he challenged this worthy adversary.

“GURUoOOOAAO!” Gi Zu bellowed out a howl that wouldn’t lose to the enboro, then dodging the enboro’s charge by a hair’s breadth, he struck his spear toward its legs. Unfortunately, even with the Mad Shishi bolstering his strength, it was no trifle task to hurt an enboro.

Gi Zu could only slowly whittle away at the strength of the enboro, so he needed to ensure that he kept his distance from the beast. Unfortunately, being a close-combat specialist, that meant that he could not fight with his best techniques, and the most he could do was to keep the enboro’s hammer-like horns at bay. But even then, he could only keep half of its attacks away, the rest

still managed to make their way towards him. One slip up and Gi Zu could find himself in the grave.

2 hours passed as Gi Zu and the enboro danced on the edge of life and death, yet somehow somehow, Gi Zu managed to successfully defeat the enboro.

When the enboro fell to the ground, an earth shaking sound erupted, and Zu Vet and the rest of the goblins looked on dumbfounded, silence filling the area for a good second or two before cheers took its place.

Zu Vet and the rest of the goblins kept an eye out while Gi Zu finished off the immobile enboro.

After finishing off his prey, Gi Zu lost the last of his strength, and so, Zu Vet and the rest of the goblins had to drag him along with the enboro back to the village.



On the way back, Zu Vet never stopped praising Gi Zu.

“I always knew you could do it, Pops! Don’t let others tell you otherwise!” Zu Vet said.

This was how Zu Vet showed his happiness, it was his defining trait.

Zu Vet lent his shoulder to Gi Zu to help him walk.

The rare class goblins, Zu Bi and Zu Bo, were also happy

After all, they were able to subjugate an opponent they believed they could not win against.

But their happiness didn’t last, for not long after, the earth shook as a giant figure appeared before them.

With a height equaling that of the trees and a giant axe-like weapon and shield in its hands, that was none other than the gigantopitecus.

“...Gigantopitecus...” Zu Vet muttered in a daze, as Gi Zu looked up at that giant figure.

Eyes hidden by its long fur, a bare mouth in contrast, from which large fangs could be seen.

That giant looked down on the goblins. When it saw the dead enboro, its lips curved into a smile.

It was as if it didn't even see the goblins as it took the corpse of the enboro.

The village goblins tried to pull back the enboro, but the gigantopitecus easily took it with one hand.

The resulting waves from its display of strength, knocked down some of the goblins, causing them to run away screaming.

"...Gu, that's pop's prey!" Zu Vet cried as he tried to chase after the gigantopitecus.

But Gi Zu stopped him.

"It's fine," Gi Zu said. "Prioritize the escape of the goblins."

"Pops!" Zu Vet cried, gritting his fist in frustration.

But he followed Gi Zu's orders and told the normal goblins to back off.

At that, they moved away from the enboro and gathered under Zu Bi and Zu Bo.

The goblins could only helplessly watch as the gigantopitecus left with the enboro's corpse. They were so frustrated at their helplessness that none of them spoke for a long time.

"Pops... I'm sorry. If only I was stronger..." Zu Vet said.

Gi Zu shook his head despite his fading consciousness. "It's good... that the others are safe... If they were to die in a place like this... I wouldn't... have a face.. to show... the... king..."

Zu Vet couldn't lift up his head. Gi Zu actually cared more for the goblins than for his hunt. That kindness touched him, and for the first time, Zu Vet found his behavior in the past to be shameful.

"Pops, you just watch... We'll show you."

From this day forward, Gi Zu's goblins would unify and grow into a powerful force.

These goblins would never forget the figure of the gigantopitecus

nonchalantly taking their pop’s prey. One day, they would surely get their revenge.

170 days until the war with the humans.



Gi Zu Ruo’s level has risen.

15 => 68

Bloodbath learned.

Bloodbath —When bathed in the blood of a brethren, damage received is lessened, but the influence of the mad god will grow stronger.



Chapter 146: Farewell Party

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	72
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (The goddess)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

The northern frontlines, also known as the mountain range of the snow god, was one of the fiercest battlefields of the Germion Kingdom. With a fierce climate, one filled with the white despair of a long winter and a brief summer, the people that frequented it were mostly ruffians.

Ever since the Kingdom of Germion was founded by an evil swordsman, they have been steadily expanding their borders, and just recently, 50 year s ago to be more specific, they’ve finally started to set their sights on the snow god’s mountains.

The tribes surrounding the mountain range known as Yugushiva were hostile to the Germion Kingdom. Their people were skilled with the sword, and many of them came to be known as fierce gods. Germion Kingdom suffered in their hands.

But everything changed when a hero appeared.

With the great sword he wielded, he called forth lightning and thunder, he

was the adventurer, Gulland Rifenin.

He went around the battlefield and claimed four chieftain heads. He was a holy knight and a hero.

He even managed to unify the soldiers that the weak-hearted commanders could not, allowing the war against the yugushiva to progress smoothly.

It has been 4 years since he assumed office.

After overcoming the disadvantage in numbers and driving the battle north, they were finally only one step away from defeating the yugushiva.

It was that same hero who was greatly puzzled when a messenger from the capital arrived at his office.

“As if the trip to the forest wasn’t enough, they even want me to attend a farewell party? It seems his majesty isn’t very interested in ending the battle here in the north,” Gulland sarcastically said.

The messenger insisted. “You may not like it, but you must go. These are the king’s orders.”

“Tch!” Gulland snapped his tongue, causing the messenger’s countenance to pale as he bowed his head.

“Fine. Who’s going to substitute for me in my absence?” Gulland asked.

“None. The northern frontlines is simply to keep status quo... The winter should bind the enemy’s movements, so it was decided that Lord Gulland’s short absence would not be a problem,” the messenger explained.

“Well, isn’t hiiiiis majesty well informed,” Gulland said in a low voice as he stifled his anger.

It was true that most of the yugushiva have been killed. Although they were skilled in the blade, before Gulland’s Blue Thunder, they were as helpless as lambs.

Their movements also grew dull in the winter and could not attempt any large-scale attacks.

Gulland could indeed leave without any problems. The fact that the king had

seen through that greatly annoyed him.

“Then, Lord Gulland, I have given you the king’s message. If you’ll excuse me...”

The messenger bowed and turned heel, leaving Gulland alone to grumble.

It was an order, so he had to go.

“It’s really annoying, but it looks like I’ll have to see that saint again,” Gulland said, then he called over his subordinates to give them orders.

“Why are you leaving too?” Gulland said, even more annoyed, as an armored female knight with red hair tied in a bundle appeared before him.

In her hands was the sword she received from the king’s treasury, Vashinant. This scarlet maiden was quite popular among the people.

“It seems an important mission is being entrusted to me,” she said.

Though a holy knight, it was only in name, as she did not yet have the strength fitting of the name. She has been going around the battlefield to learn from other holy knights. Once, she went south, then she came back to the north.

“Tch, well, whatever. I’m going to the capital to report. That’s all, but... Oh, right. You’re acquainted with that saint, right?” Gulland said.

“Did something happen to Lady Reshia?” Lili asked.

Lili has already gotten used to Gulland’s rough way of talking. She no longer cowered when he spoke, and instead, even started speaking back. Gulland himself has also grown fond of Lili and her cursed sword after their many battles together.

Of course, he would never say it out loud, but he did acknowledge her.

“Apparently, she’ll be going back to the Ivory Tower. Seriously, what a pain! Getting in the way of my battle!” Gulland said, annoyed.

“Then please tell her something in my place,” Lili calmly said.

“Hah? And here I thought you’d cry and beg me to take you along. You sure are taking this in stride,” Gulland said, surprised.

“I’ve already been informed through Lady Reshia’s letters. Besides, I am no longer a child who bawls her eyes out, but a knight who wields her sword for the people. I won’t cry anymore,” Lili said.

“Hmph, well haven’t you grown,” Gulland said.

Lili told Gulland her message, then Gulland headed back to the capital.

I to go to a cave not too far from the fortress to hear the report of the koro dwarves.

“To think there was a cave in a place like this,” I said.

Making a map took a lot of work, as it required people to see every nook and cranny of a place before it could be made.

My request to these koro dwarves was to find me an ore deposit.

“Please look at this,” a koro dwarf said as he handed me a black stone.

He told me to look at it, but it looked no different from any other rock.

“This is good black iron, the fuel for weapons,” the koro dwarf said.

So this is the raw material that makes our weapons and armor. It’s an odd feeling to see the unprocessed material that makes up our equipment.

“Is this cave an ore deposit then?” I asked.

“Yes, though how much can be mined from it remains to be seen,” the koro dwarf replied.

These little guys might be able to forge weapons and armor, but even weapons will one day break.

My old iron great sword, for example, was plenty sturdy, but in the end, it still broke. Once the weapons break, we’ll need to rely on these guys to repair them.

So, weapons are consumables, and we’ll need ensure a constant supply of them to fight our war.

“Can you find out?” I asked.

“With time,” the koro dwarf replied.

“Then, please... Also, if possible, I would like for you to teach the centaurs and us goblins that method,” I said.

The koro dwarves looked at each for a moment, then they nodded to show their agreement.

In order for the goblins, the demihumans, and the koro dwarves to start trading technology, a little nudging from me was necessary. We goblins don't have much to offer, after all. The one with the most to learn from such an arrangement is none other than us goblins.

A black shadow passed by over my head. When I looked up, I noted that it was none other than the harpy, Yushika, who was currently landing on the ground.

“You weren't in the fortress, so I figured you'd be here,” she said.

I greeted Yushika as she folded her wings, then I nodded and stated my request. This woman, who was a merchant to the core, would never come to me without an agenda.

“As usual, you're quick to pick up. Actually, the elves entrusted me with a message,” Yushika said.

The demihumans would certainly find it difficult to refuse a request from the Forni elves, their benefactors.

Apparently, the elves were bringing back the old elven school.

“Hmm...” I folded my arms as I went deep in thought.

When Yushika saw that, she thought I was confused, so she explained the advantages of having a school. “Your Majesty might not be familiar with it, but school is a place where people learn. Various races would send the smartest among them to study. And when these people have graduated, they will return to their homelands and use what they've learned to better it.”

That was indeed what a school was.

“The elves are currently gathering exceptional people to become students of their academy. There will be no discrimination; demihumans, goblins... anyone

will be able to enter,” Yushika explained.

School was indeed a far-fetched dream for the goblins. Even the concept of economy that we tried to teach them a few days ago... There’s far too much that they don’t know.

For the meantime, I should pick out which goblins to send. Education is needed to make excellent bureaucrats. If in the end, it turns out that goblins show are hopeless at managerial work, then I’ll just have to get others to do it. Elves, demihumans, even humans... It doesn’t really matter.

That being said, I wonder if knowing too much might end up creating a crack in my reign?

I am not perfect, I know that well. I make mistakes from time to time, and even fail sometimes... If the goblins become smarter, will there come a day when the few elite rises up against me to point out my flaws?

No, it doesn’t matter. I won’t cower from it.

A king is one who stands fearless in the face of all opposition.

I am a king. it doesn’t matter who it is, I will face them without shame.

A king is a guardian. A king is a guide. A king is the very embodiment of pride.

I must become a king that the goblins can be proud of.

“...Very well, I shall accept the elves’ proposition. In the next few days, I shall send some goblins to the elven village. What of the descendants of the crystals?” I said.

“We shall also accept. Being able to study at the school put up by our benefactors is an honor.”

It seems this school has enough value just in name alone.

I nodded back as Yushika wryly smiled.

“If I may excuse myself, then...” Yushika said as she flew back to the sky.

Uneasy, I turned to the koro dwarf. “Pick two exceptional from your ranks. We shall send them to the elven school.”

The koro dwarves’ eyes visibly bulged, then after glancing at each other for a

good second or two, the koro dwarf I was talking to asked. “is that alright?”

“I may be the leader of the goblins, the race responsible for the destruction of your village, but I intend to treat you with impartiality. Besides, holding people back just because they’re of a different race will only hurt the future.”

After I asked the koro dwarves to continue their search for ores, I turned heel and left.

I don’t have the luxury of burying exceptional people in the mud.

There is far too much to do. The food problem, the government system... We don’t have time.

As I kept the irritation I felt at bay, I went back to the Fortress of the Abyss.

In the capital of Germion Kingdom, word of Reshia’s return to the Ivory Tower had already circulated.

Be it the merchants who tended to their stalls, or the laborers working by the streets, or the officers of the army, or the priests... everyone – man, woman, and child – talked about the departure of the saint. Of course, Mill Dora had also heard of the news.

The children she supported numbered over 10. Before she met Reshia, when she stopped over for a short while before heading to the forest, she had resorted to thievery, but after meeting her, she has started working an honest job.

Of course, the most profits always came from her second name ‘mage killer’.

Reshia never mentioned anything about her gangster-like work as an adventurer; she was like a hero to the children.

After finishing her work for the day, she came back to the children exhausted. Normally, she would eat and retire for the day as soon as she came back, but the children surrounded her.

“Is Reshia really leaving?” The children asked with depressed voices.

It was clear as day how they felt.

“Lady Reshia herself has already decided, so it can’t be helped,” Mill said.

But the children wouldn't take that for an answer.

"That's not it, we thought there was something even we could do. Mill, you're an adventurer too, aren't you? We'll give you a quest." One of the children said.

"Forget it. It's hopeless. I'm not that skilled as an adventurer anyway," Mill said.

Though she said that, she also wasn't that eager about letting Reshia leave just like that.

"...So, what do you guys have in mind?" Mill found herself asking after a sigh.

When she said that, the children handed her a small hair clip.

"We prepared a parting gift. Please give this to Reshia."

It was something they'd bought from the stores, a hair clip made with a shiny shell. Anyone could tell at first glance that it was cheap.

"Lady Reshia is famous, so she'll probably be getting lots of gifts," Mill said as she sighed again. "And if you're going to give me a quest, you're gonna have to pay up."

These children who were born in the orphanage would have hard time once they went out into society. That was something Mill learned firsthand. If she spoiled these children now, they'll be no good once they grow up. Of course, they were also being annoying, so she was especially harsh today.

"...This is Mii's important friend, but I'll give him to you," the child, Mii, said as she handed a dirty, lukewarm bear to her.

The fact that she handed that to her showed just how much this meant to her. That tugged at Mill's heartstrings so much so that her eyes became watery as she looked at Miinaana.

The other children surrounded her and gave her something important of their own as they begged her to carry out their request.

Mill sighed deeply as she roughly rubbed a little boy's head with teary eyes, then she accepted the hair clip.

"...Well, I'll make something happen," Mill said as she stood up from her chair,

promising the children that she'll take care of it, then she tucked the children snugly into bed.

She wasn't sure herself whether Reshia would actually accept the hair clip, but no matter what, she had to meet her... for the children's sake.

"I guess I'll ask the adventurers for help," Mill muttered.

She was always quiet around the other adventurers, so she was never close with anyone. There were a few, however. For example, Wyatt, whom she was closest with, but unfortunately, he had gone somewhere, so she couldn't rely on him.

Reshia herself was also under house arrest, so she needed to go to the castle.

"If I get found out, it'll be the death sentence for sure," Mill said, clicking her tongue.

"But I have to answer to their prayers," she said.

Like the wind, Mill ran through the evening streets



The most influential people of the country were gathered in the giant ballroom. Powerful merchants, influential priests, nobles, bureaucrats, military officers, royalty...

Lined up before these men were some of the greatest and most luxurious delicacies. One bottle of the wines served here, for example, would take a whole month's salary for a measly commoner.

Even the music that played in the backdrop was splendid as the royal court musician's music seemed to make even the flowers bloom.

Each one of these people who were permitted to attend this feast were all capable of representing their class. They competed with their splendor and exchanged information under the guise of a cheerful feast. To these people, this feast was no different from an opportunity to scout their rivals for weakness.

On the onset, a cheerful feast, but in the inside, it was a festering tumor.

It was in that sort of atmosphere that a wind blew.

“His Majesty the King and her holiness, the saint, Lady Reshia Fel Zeal!” The chamberlain announced.

Claps greeted the king and the saint as they made their entrance.

Reshia’s brows lightly raised up, but she was mostly expressionless as she walked with the king to her seat.

“Please don’t mind me. Enjoy the feast,” the king said, and the music began once more.

The influential people came one after another. They would greet the king first and then Reshia

There seemed to be no end to the greetings when the chamberlain spoke once more.

“The Holy Knight, Lord Gulland Rifenin!”

The people made a stir.

The hero, Gulland Rifenin, who was likened to the heroes of old was participating.

The crowd showered him with applause and smile, though what they were truly thinking was veiled in shadows.

Gulland’s expression was unchanging as he passed by the people and knelt before the king.

“I have returned from the northern frontlines, Your Majesty,” he said.

“Welcome back. Food and drink have been prepared, eat to your heart’s content,” the king said.

“...Thank you for your grace, Your Majesty,” Gulland said.

Gulland gracefully turned heel as he withdrew from the king and approached Reshia.

“It’s been awhile, Lady Reshia. You seem to be doing well,” Gulland said.

“Yes, you seem to be doing well too,” Reshia said.

Only a few words were exchanged before the two parted, and people started

crowding Reshia and Gulland.

There was no end to the greetings. Even as one conversation would end and Reshia would try to get a seat to rest, more merchants lying in wait would appear to strike up a conversation. To the nobles, this feast was important, as it was held by the king. To the old merchants, this was an opportunity for them to spread their roots in the capital.

But there was a merchant who had just recently moved from the neighboring countries. He would keep talking to Reshia despite her expressionless face or her lack of reply. Naturally, anyone would raise their brows at such stubbornness.

To make things worse, the merchant appraised Reshia like a product to be sold. Reshia had almost yelled at the man, but fortunately, Gulland interjected.

“Sorry, but I have business with the saint,” he said, smiling.

Unfortunately, his good deed, if he did intend it as such, was not met with welcome eyes. Reshia looked at him like she was looking at a man with bad body odor.

Meanwhile, Gulland stared daggers at the man. He was smiling, but his eyes were not. The pressure emanating from him was just like that of a powerful beast, causing the merchant to draw cold sweat all over.

“O-O-Of ncourse!” The merchant said in a panic as he quickly fled the scene.

Gulland extended his hand to Reshia.

“Your hand, my lady,” Gulland said.

At that, all eyes gathered on them. Though troubled, Reshia had no choice but to take Gulland’s hand.

“It seems you don’t have your weapon with you today,” Reshia said, wanting to at least show her displeasure through her words, but Gulland only laughed.

Ignoring the crowd that was starting to stir, the holy knight and the saint went outside.

As soon as they got out, Reshia threw Gulland’s hand away.

“What are you scheming?” Reshia asked.

“Can you not spit on a guy’s kindness?” Gulland petitioned, but Reshia’s eyes only grew colder.

“...Ok, don’t. I have a message from Lili,” Gulland said.

“Ms. Lili? What’s going on?” Reshia asked.

Seeing a crack form on Reshia’s expressionless face, Gulland couldn’t help but grin.

When Reshia saw that, she frowned and tried to bring back the frost to her face.

“Well, don’t fret, it’s nothing special. She just wants to let you know that the days she spent as your knight were her happiest,” Gulland said.

Reshia thought he would say something acrimonious, but contrary to her expectations, the words he spoke were truly from Lili.

“...I, see...” Reshia said, feeling down.

Gulland was disappointed to see that she believed him. “And here I thought you’d call me out for lying.”

Reshia shook her head and sorrowfully smiled. “I can at least see through someone when they’re lying... Well, then, Lord Holy Knight, if you’ll excuse me.”

Gulland clicked his tongue as he watched Reshia leave.

He went back to the feast, but he just couldn’t enjoy it.

“...Hmph, Lord Holy Knight, huh.”

Gulland ignored the flatteries of the nobles and left his seat.

164 days until the war with the humans.

Chapter 147: Departure

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	72
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (The goddess)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

Within the country of the ‘holy knights’, only seven have reached the apex.

Every single one of these seven had their own peculiarities, but they were all strong enough that they couldn’t ignore one another.

The Knight of Destruction, Zelkov; The Iron-armed Knight, Gowen; the Knight of Storms, Gulland; the Twin-Swords Knight, Vald; the Ripper Knight, Sivara; the Sharp-Eyed knight, Jize; and the late Lightning-Fast Knight, Gene Marlon.

A mad man loved by the gods, an old veteran used to war, a peak existence among adventurers, a traveler from the east... Their origin and purpose were as varied as their personalities, but there was one thing they had in common, they held the peace of the country in their hands.

On their back, they carried the soldiers they led and the countless citizens that they protected.

Of course, they knew this fact well, and it was because of that that King Ashtal named them holy knight and gave them honor and wealth befitting that of the

kingdom's guardians.

"...I don't like it."

Gulland's animal-like instincts were tingling.

He didn't know why, but for some reason, that merchant that was bothering Reshia was nowhere to be seen.

As Gulland left his seat, he left the ballroom and went outside, to walk under the tranquil sky of the night god lit by the red light of the moonlight goddess.

Sounds of the feast grew more and more distant as he walked, then he heard something.

That something drew Gulland's attention.

It was the sound of grass being grazed; the sound of a person's voice being forcefully stifled. For someone like Gulland who was used to the quiet of the snowy battlefield, the castle was irritatingly noisy.

His ears honed by combat, Gulland walked toward the source of that sound.

"Oh, how cruel my dear saint, how cruel... How could you hurt this one's fragile heart?" That annoying merchant from awhile ago said with ragged breath as he approached Reshia, who was currently being held by a man covered in black, the merchant's escort perhaps.

The man in black noticed Gulland's footsteps, but the merchant was oblivious.

The merchant extended his hands toward Reshia, caressing her slender cheeks that were as smooth as clay.

"Ahh... Ahh..." The man moaned.

As his hands caressed Reshia's cheeks like a slug, desire took him, and he jumped to embrace her, but—

"That's enough, scum," a voice suddenly resounded from behind him, causing him to freeze in his tracks.

When he turned around, his eyes almost fell out of their sockets when he saw Gulland standing behind him with his arms folded.

"K-K-K-Kill him! Sigmund!" The merchant commanded.

The black guard immediately threw Reshia away and drew his dagger.

As Reshia fell to the ground, unconscious, Gulland snapped his tongue.

“What an unnecessary mess I’ve found myself in.”

As Gulland muttered to himself, the black guard swung his blade at Gulland’s throat.

“Hmph,” Gulland haughtily said as he dodged the black guard’s sword by a hair’s breadth.

At the same time, he caught the black guard’s arms, keeping him from moving.

“Weak,” Gulland said.

With no room to run, Gulland’s fist descended freely on the man.

There wasn’t even a sign that Gulland was about to make a move. He just swung his fist like a beast attacking its prey, sending the black guard flying into a wall.

With no way out, the black guard reached for his own armor.

“What are you...” Gulland asked when the black guard suddenly threw his armor at him, causing his vision to move away from the black guard for a moment.

When he looked for the black guard again, all traces of him were gone.

“He ran...” Gulland muttered, then he turned to the merchant.

“E-Eeek...” The merchant cried as Gulland’s eyes bore into him.

Gulland knocked the merchant out, then he carried both him and Reshia.

“...What a pain,” Gulland complained.

“GAU, GUUUU!” Gastra barked when Gulland entered Reshia’s room, but Gulland ignored him and left Reshia on her bed before leaving.

“...Lord Holy Knight, huh,” Gulland said as he became unnecessarily sentimental, then he closed the door behind him and sat in front of it.

He didn’t feel like returning to the feast, so he figured he might as well wait

here in the silence of the night god.

Gulland closed his eyes.



Gi Ji Arsil's report had finally arrived.

The walls of the human fortress ran 10km long. It was so long, I couldn't help but wonder from where and how they managed to procure all that stone in such a short time, but even more surprising was the height of the walls.

The walls were over 3 meters tall. Moreover, people could walk atop it.

That meant that the walls weren't just long and high, they were also thick.

It should be safe to assume that the castle walls are arranged in a circle. As for what's inside, it's probably either defensive facilities or a town.

According to the report, there were also things similar to shields placed near the exit leading to the human territory.

They are probably meant to obstruct one's vision and stop an attack, but that's something to think about another time. Right now, I should focus my attention on the human fortress.

The humans have gone far and beyond my expectations.

Walls 3 meters high coupled with several defensive facilities. Attacking the human fortress does not seem like an easy task.

Beyond the forest is a flat land. There might be a hill or two out there, but there shouldn't be anything taller than the human fortress.

"A shield thrust before us, huh."

Should we capture it despite the cost? Or should we just ignore it?

To begin with, my goal isn't to capture the fortress but to defeat the human kingdom.

The human villages shouldn't all be that big.

"Shumea, there's something I want to ask," I said.

Shumea has been training with Felbi ever since recovering.

“Hmm? About the human villages?” She asked, puzzled.

“Gi Ji’s report came in just awhile ago. Apparently, there’s a large fortress right in front of the fortress.”

“That’s probably a colonial city,” Shumea said.

Oh? It seems to be famous.

Things finally made sense after listening to Shumea’s explanation. It seems these so-called ‘colonial cities’ are bases the humans build to begin an invasion. With it working with the city behind it, it is certainly a threat.

I thought it was a shield, but it turns out, it’s actually a spear meant to drag us into a war of attrition.

It would be great if the humans could fight among themselves, but that’s obviously too much to hope for. After all, they’re all united as one race fighting against monsters.

Not to mention, the person leading them is that general. I can’t expect them to make much mistakes.

In that case...

We’ll have no choice but to take them by surprise from behind.

We have to use something unexpected, something they haven’t thought of, a method beyond their wildest imagination...

...Unfortunately, nothing really comes to mind. The blessing of the goddess of wisdom isn’t something that comes just because one wants it. Well, I’ll just take my time.

I’ll have to pull out that card to gather information and steal a march on them.

“Shumea,” I called out.

“What is it, Boss?” She asked.

“Do you want to go out of the forest?” I asked.

Shumea looked at me with a shocked face, then she made a difficult face and said, “please don’t ask difficult questions.”

“It’s not really difficult, though. Do you want to go or not?”

“You sure make it sound simple, Boss. I hope you haven’t forgotten that I’m a slave.”

“Former slave,” I corrected.

Shumea scratched her head. “Well, yeah, but... Damn it! Honestly, I really want to go out! But, it’s just... you know... kinda scary?”

At first, excited, then meek as a lamb. Even Shumea seemed embarrassed at how cowardly she was acting, as a blush could be seen on her cheeks.

“Hmm...”

According to her, slaves who have lost their master will become the slave of whoever catches them, so we’ll have to do something about her identity as a slave.

“It should be fine as long as we give you a new master,” I said.

“W-Wait a moment, Boss. Goblins are no good,” she said.

Naturally, but at least, she’s catching on. Good, that will make this quick.

“Obviously, especially since the master himself will also need some identification,” I said.

“Well, yeah, but do you have someone like that?” She asked.

“Yes, the only question is whether that person will agree or not. And even if that person does agree, the fortress probably won’t rest easy knowing who it is we’re placing our hopes on. But after that, everything will hinge on you,” I said.

“I owe you a lot, Boss, so don’t worry. You can definitely count on me,” Shumea said as she laughed.

Now, all that’s left is to pick out the master.

After sending a messenger to her, she finally appeared before me.

“Are you serious?” She asked.

Yes, it was none other than Pale Symphoria. The green light reflecting from the trees of the forest illuminated her and Selena as they looked at me.

When it came to healing secret medicines, being bathed in light was quite effective.

“Yes,” I nodded.

Pale became quiet.

I would be lying if I said I didn’t have my doubts. She wasn’t like Gi Ga and the others who have sworn fealty to me. She also wasn’t someone like Shumea who couldn’t betray me because of her circumstances.

The demihumans and the elves might both be our allies in this war against the humans, but their positions were vastly different from each other.

“I don’t understand... You are not a fool. Surely, you must realize that I will betray you,” Pale said, startling Selena.

Having that said straight to my face, I couldn’t help but wryly smile.

“The elves won’t be enough to fetter me,” she said.

“I figured that would be the case,” I said.

“Then why?” She asked suddenly, and I honestly replied.

“Do you think what you know can hurt us?” I asked.

“That’s...”

“Humans can have a broader outlook because of the knowledge they possess. It is, therefore, a king’s duty to give one the opportunity to ascertain the truth,” I said.

Puzzled, Pale asked. “Are you saying you’re giving me time and opportunity?”

This woman, Pale Symphoria, wasn’t someone who would turn to my side so easily, but after coming here to this fortress, she has started to change. After all, she has seen our way of life. That alone is enough to change the one truth she has held all this time... We are not monsters.

I’d love to know what she thought when she realized that, but while it probably wasn’t at Felbi’s level, it must have still caused a world-shaking change of her perspective.

I’m going to use this as an opportunity to pull this genius into my army.

“Confident, aren’t we?” She said.

I smiled back.

It’s a risky gamble, but I can’t just wait for her feelings to change naturally.

Pale, I don’t know if you truly haven’t noticed it or are simply feigning ignorance, but...

When you fought me in the battlefield back then, you were smiling.

You’re happiest when leading an army in a battle of life and death.

I don’t know if it’s hunting monsters that you find fun or having power in your grasp, but regardless, I have chosen you.

“Of course, if you refuse, there’s nothing I can do,” I said.

“Please let me think a bit,” Pale said.

Selena looked at her with a tinge of displeasure.

The next day, Pale agreed. Selena would be coming with her and she also recommended Felbi to act as an interim between Shumea and me.

Like this, the party of three elves and one human set out into the world of humans.



That was a memory of the time when he still believed in the illusion called happiness.

A memory tinged with the red of blood and shame, and remorse for icing.

No matter how hard he cried or flailed his arms, that was a memory in the past he could never reach.

The village he lived in was a small village.

It was a village of 100 people surrounded by a fence that kept the monsters away. It was a small peaceful village where everyone knew each other.

Life as an adventurer had its risks, but it paid well, allowing him to have a small fortune.

He had a fiancée. He had a mother, who though old, was cheeky. He had a

cute younger sister.

Though he wasn't rich, he was happy.

But one day, that happiness was destroyed.

A horde of monsters attacked his village.

As a young man, he flailed his arms and mustered every little bit of strength he could, but struggle as he tried, in the end, the monsters broke through and killed the men who fought.

As for the women, they were—

He stretched out his hand, but his blood-stained hands couldn't reach them...

Suddenly, his consciousness became detached... Detached from that dream he's seen countless times.

The sun of the fragrant spring shone on him, bringing him into a warm embrace that lulled him into a deep slumber.

In that deep slumber, there were no nightmares.

“...”

When the sun's rays fell on his closed eyelids, he finally woke up.

He clicked his tongue upon realizing that he had fallen asleep, then when he saw a blanket on him, he became confused.

The door to the spire had already been opened, the insides empty like that of a snake's shed skin.

Picking himself up, he went to the terrace of the castle and looked down on the city.

Crowds had gathered to wish the saint farewell.

“Saint, huh? What a load of bull,” he spat, then he left to prepare for his return to the north.

He would not waver because of something like this. He was a holy knight, an existence who slayed monsters and protected the people.

It was just that his eyes couldn't help but follow after the saint's leaving

figure.

The crowds showered her with cheers, and just a little, she tried to wave back.

A cheap hair-clip could be seen attached firmly on her hair, but no one except for some boys by the corner of a street, noticed it.

163 days until the battle with the humans.

Intermission: Gi Do’s Anguish

Status	
Name	Gi Do Buruga
Race	Goblin
Level	1
Class	Shaman
Possessed Skills	Magic Manipulation; Realized Wings; Protection of the Wind; Wind Spear; Three-Verse Chant; Guidance of the Goddess of Wisdom; Researcher
Divine Protection	God of Wind
Attributes	Wind

The great king said that there was much to be learned from the elves.

He was right.

Presently, I am studying with my teacher, Gi Za Zakuend, here in the elven village.

Just some time ago, they hated us, and yet now, here we are in Gastair, doing ‘class-work’.

My teacher says that to simply leave everything to the king is to fail our duties as his retainers. We had to always be thinking what we could do for the king.

I share my teacher’s sentiments. If we only obeyed the king, we would be no better than beasts.

The king intends to defeat the humans. He has even considered what will happen afterwards. But this is something I only heard from the elves.

According to the old teacher, Falun, the king is trying to create a Kingdom of Goblins.

There are certain things that a kingdom needs.

But... What is a kingdom anyway?

"A kingdom is a place where people live," the old teacher explained, but that only confused me more.

I mean, according to that logic, isn't the forest a kingdom?

I asked the old teacher that, and he grinned at me. "Your king wishes for an even bigger kingdom."

I see, so the king wants a great kingdom.

In that case, what would a kingdom need?

"One, is a set of 'laws' to adhere to; another, is a 'people' to rule over; and lastly, power." The old teacher wrote the terms we'd only recently learned on the sand plate.

"The law is the foundation of a government. It is only after establishing the law that one can tax the people and judge wrongdoers and direct the path of the people."

Tax... A way for the country to gather wealth. In other words, the country will be able procure lots of meat.

Judge, judgment, trials... That refers to the exchange between Lord Gi Go and his majesty. For example, the people have no right to complain even if they are killed if they point their sword at the king.

To direct, guidance, policies... For example, one doesn't have to die as long as he doesn't point his sword at the king.

"From what we've discussed a few days ago, there are those among you who have received a family name from the king and have been given the right to own a land, correct?" The old teacher confirmed.

I nodded.

"That is something akin to a contract," the old teacher said.

What is he talking about? That was the king's orders.

"They are similar, though not wholly," the old teacher continued.

Mu, mu?

"The king has rewarded you with a family name and a territory."

On the plate of sand, he wrote the word 'king' on one plot of land, then he added the words 'last name'.

"When you work, the king will reward you. You offer the king labor, and in exchange, the king gives you a fitting reward. When you look at it from this perspective, doesn't it look just like a contract?"

N-Now that he mentions it...

But wouldn't this sort of thinking be disrespectful to the king?

I can't come to terms with it, but I can't fault the logic.

"The law is really just a collection of such promises, which is why, it is imperative that the law be obeyed."

Agreed. A promise with the king is indeed something to be protected.

"But there are people who can't keep these promises."

Such people are unforgivable!

"Yes, which is why a kingdom needs power. There must be a king and an army, and when everything is put together, that is what we refer to as a kingdom."

But why does it feel like the kingdom is bigger than the king? The king is greater than all!

"Such a king is not a king but a tyrant. You cannot call such a person a wise ruler."

Are you mocking the king!?

"Gi Do Buruga, do you know why the king is a king? Think about it, that will be your assignment."

The old teacher grinned as he said that, then he ended the class.

“Why is the king a king?”

Gi Do couldn't help but groan.

The king is a king because he is a king.

Isn't that obvious?



“It seems a kingdom can't be built so easily after all,” teacher and I poured our efforts into the research on ether after the class with old Falun ended.

“I don't think it's wise to believe everything that old elf says,” teacher said as he gathered the winds around his staff. “I know the old elf is knowledgeable and experienced, but in the end, the things he says are an elf's ideals. We goblins have our own way of thinking.”

True, I certainly don't like the idea of calling the king a despot.

“That might be so, but...”

“And besides, we haven't learned anything that might be profitable.”

Teacher made a difficult face as the gathered winds became bigger.

“Profitable?” Gi Do asked.

“Yes, for example, Gi Do Buruga, you might know of ‘law’, but can you give me something concrete?” His teacher asked.

Now that he mentions it... I don't actually know law!

“The elves do not have a king. Shure could have become one, but in the end, he just became a representative of the sage's council.”

Teacher is just as difficult as old Falun.

“Isn't the king, king? Why would the representative of the sage's council...”

“No, he definitely could have become one...”

As teacher became thoughtful, the gathered winds above him shot forth, dispersing to different directions, then his face became sterner.

“It's no good. I can't concentrate,” he said.

He's not satisfied? Even after controlling that much wind?

Teacher's spirit of inquiry is indeed only something I can admire.

"Reality is different from idea," he said.

Does he mean a country is only an idea?

Teacher waved his hands, so I excused myself.



I walked aimlessly, wondering to myself what I could do for the king.

Teacher's research on magic and demihuman blood seems to be progressing, but what about me? Isn't there something I could do?

But...

I can't control the winds like teacher does, so researching magic seems pointless. Because in the end I'll just end up admiring teacher. I have to take a different path.

As I walked and pondered like that, I happened across the elven princess, sitting under the shade of a tree as she read a book.

If I recall correctly, she is Princess Shunaria.

In search of an answer, I decided to call out to her.

"Greetings, Princess Shunaria," I said.

She turned to me with a displeased expression, but when she saw who it was calling her, her face turned to that of shock, only to change into displeasure again a moment later.

What an expressive person.

"Just as I was wondering who it was, it turns out to be a goblin," she said.

Daughter of the king's sworn friend, Shure Forni.

She puffed up her cheeks and pouted her mouth as she complained.

"Flattery from a goblin person is a bit..."

I don't recall flattering anyone, though.

“My name is Gi Do Buruga, it’s a pleasure to make your acquaintance,” I said.

“Shunaria Forni. It is my pleasure as well,” she replied.

“I noticed you were making a difficult face as you read... What kind of book is it?”

She wryly smiled and showed me the book. “A history book.”

“History? What is history?” I asked.

“I suppose it’s only normal that you don’t know. It is a record of the events that occurred in the past. In a sense, you could say it’s the crystallization of knowledge.”

A record of the past? I don’t understand that very well, but the crystallization of knowledge!? That sounds spectacular!

“This one tells the history of a human country... Would you like to read it?”

“Is that alright? I thought for sure it would be something precious...”

“It’s fine. Here,” Lord Shunaria said as she handed me the book.

I quickly opened it, but...

“...Ati..., 41... years? Erm...”

I can’t read!

I just started learning how to read recently, so there’s a lot of characters I don’t know.

“Ah, could it be you...”

“My deepest apologies. After you went out of your way to lend it to me, I’m afraid there are simply far too many difficult words...”

“I see...”

Lord Shunaria seems disappointed. I have no excuse.

“Then, how about I teach you?” She suddenly proposed.

What!?

“If it is alright, then by all means!”

I said without thinking.

A crystallization of knowledge... Yes, this must be it!

I have finally found something I can do for the king!

“Ah, but I have a request first,” Lord Shunaria said.

“What is it? If it’s something I can do, then!” I replied.

“We elves might have become sworn friends with the goblins, but we know next to nothing about you. So, won’t you tell me about your people?”

Oh, is that it? That’s not a problem at all.

“Gladly,” I said.

Lord Shunaria smiled as she watched me deeply nod.

After this, the elves would start seeing a goblin with a history book on one hand and a large flower on the other.

When word of this reached the Fortress of the Abyss, Gi Gi Orudo’s eyes went as dark as the black of the night. As for whether he approached Gi Do or not... Well...

Chapter 148: The Distant South

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	72
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (The goddess)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

After running some tests, we finally found out what was causing the seeds to die.

The soil is bad.

It was something very simple, but it had taken us a lot of time to realize it. Now that we know the cause, we can start solving the problem.

The soil was the problem, so naturally, we should try changing it.

There are trees and plants growing around the fortress, but they probably have some sort of resistance that the praya seed doesn’t have.

The miasma surrounding the fortress had gotten much thinner, but it seems it’s effects lingers yet.

This won’t be easy to solve.

Transporting soil from elsewhere is going to take a while, and if the miasma affects the soil, everything could end up being for naught.

At some point, I wondered if maybe the seed was the problem, but after realizing just how many of its kind grew in areas away from the fortress, I realized how faulty of a hypothesis that was.

I guess the soil is really the culprit, after all.

The demihuman manager and I racked our heads for a solution, but in the end, what solved our problems was a coincidence.

The soil-eaters (mole) Gi Gi had brought back, couldn't only be found in his village but everywhere around the Fortress of the Abyss. With these critters, it was possible to have them eat the soil of another land and then have them excrete it elsewhere.

Now that I've experienced it for myself, the gift of the goddess of wisdom was indeed just like a flash of lightning.

The miasma could affect soil, but what about something that has been excreted?

The demihuman manager and I immediately put our hypothesis to test, and to our surprise, the praya seeds started growing at a frightening rate.

Perhaps it's because the soil is the possession of the god of earth, but something that has been excreted belongs to the god of poop... Only, there's no such god. At the very least, I've never heard of one.

The influence of the gods is indeed a troubling thing.

"Your master seems to be quite popular," I sarcastically said to the snakes in my two arms.

The living detest the dead, though they only do so because of their ignorance.

So Verid says, but as far as the world is concerned, believing in things one can't see is even more foolish.

Even if the world can understand some of it, the only ones who have the leisure to think of such things are those who have no trouble filling their stomach.

"Is that your opinion as someone who doesn't have to worry about feeding himself?" I asked.

The time to live for ourselves has long passed. Now, all that awaits us is death for our master.

Verid spoke no more after that, and neither did I.

Anyhow, with this, we've passed through the first stage of solving our food problem. I don't know how big of a harvest we can have, but as we expand the fields, we should be able to expect a considerable harvest.

All that's left now is to change the goblins' diet, which is the bigger problem, actually. Makes one want to sigh.



At the king's behest, Gi Gu Verbena had gone south.

As a goblin skilled in leadership and as someone who possessed the skill, wolf pack, Gi Gu was able to find much success in the south, allowing him to evolve into a duke class.

He was so successful that some of the goblins even mistook him for the king.

But Gi Gu refused the title, and instead insisted that he be called 'great brother' instead.

Gi Gu led the three rare class brothers Gu Big, Gu Tough, Gu Long, and the rest of his goblin horde deeper down south.

Leading the long-armed goblins of the south, their numbers – counting only the warriors – exceeded more than 500. There were even some beast tamers and druids among them. Their horde had a power comparable to that of a small country.

Gi Gu made use of different types of warriors because of his admiration for the king, but the reason he was able to pull it off was in and of itself a testament to his skill.

Gi Gu had conquered 20 different goblin villages and picked out the best among them to create a platoon of warriors, which he took with him as he headed further south.

Before they knew it, they had already left the forest.

A desolate vast stony desert extended before them as the fire god's body shone its scorching light on the land and the burning winds blew the hot sand, creating a fog-like veil in the air.

Gi Gu who had never left the forest was shocked to see the world outside.

"This is... not our home," he muttered.

To Gi Gu, the thick forest was their home. He might have lived in a cave once or twice, but in the end, that was a cave within the forest. In the forest, the many trees would soften the light of the sun, and the cool breeze the winds blew was always gentle to the skin. The presence of life was ever present, beasts and vegetation alike.

That was Gi Gu's definition of the word 'home'. Which is why when he saw the desert for the first time, he was not impressed.

"We have already reached the end of the forest. We have done enough."

In truth, not even the humans lived in this harsh desert, and this land actually extended even further, but Gi Gu had no way of knowing that.

"The time to return has come."

After seeing the southern desert, Gi Gu Verbena turned around and led the southern goblins back to the north.

Along the way back, Gi Gu's great horde never once stopped.

If their way of fighting were to be described in a few words, it would be: brute force.

Brute force through sheer numbers.

It was a fighting style that Gi Gu naturally arrived at with his high leadership skills and the goblins' high reproductive rate, but Gi Gu went as far as to perfect it.

If a lone goblin would lose, then three would be equal. If three were equal, then six would surely be able to secure victory. Following that line of thought, Gi Gu arranged his horde and fought enemy after enemy.

The southern goblins had long arms, so they could climb the trees easily. Gi

Gu took that into consideration as he formulated a plan specifically for these goblins. As a result, the goblins under him would attack from the ground and from above at almost the same time.

Before Gi Gu's goblins, stopping for a single moment meant being turned into minced meat the next. That fighting style mercilessly tore through monsters and beasts alike.

Though everything seemed plain from the frontlines where Gi Gu stood, to those on the receiving end of his charge, it was like a never ending wave of goblins.

Gi Gu's horde even destroyed an orc village along the way, they even pursued them. Normally, it was the orcs hunting the goblins, but Gi Gu's horde was so mighty that their positions were switched. Even the strong tusk elephants (Dino) of the southern forest, who stood out from other elephants because of their long snout and tusks, were not spared from the Gi Gu Horde's mad march.

There were a lot of monsters that lived south from the Fortress of the Abyss.

The antmen (killer ants) who would go to and fro the forest and the desert.

The robust orcs.

The rhinoceros-beetle men (scarab) who possessed a hard shell.

Even with just three races alone, they covered a considerable area of the south.

They were not without weakness, however. The orcs did not have big villages and the scarabs could only cover a small area with their slow bodies.

The most annoying ones were the killer ants, who though weak in a one-on-one fight were strong in groups.

It was exactly these killer ants who blocked Gi Gu's way.

"Killer ants, in front. Lots, of them!" A goblin reported in an almost scream-like fashion.

Gi Gu fiercely laughed. "Good timing, I was wondering what gift to bring. I'll settle my dispute with these guys today."

Unsheathing the long sword by his waist, Gi Gu let out an overpowering howl and commanded his subordinates. “Warriors! Do not stop! There is no one in these lands who can make us halt our march!”

As the three brother goblins directly under Gi Gu shouted back in response, a fire was lit within the rest of the goblins.

As Gi Gu proceeded, a lake and a battle near it between the antmen and the goblins could be seen.

There was nothing resembling a battle formation.

Their numbers seemed equal, and the battle proceeded with the goblins starting to surround the antmen.

When Gi Gu saw that he commanded the goblins, “Focus on attacking! There’s no need to complete the encirclement!”

As the goblins started to surround the antmen, they focused on their attacks and tried to break through the army of antmen. Gi Gu’s order was spot on, as it kept the antmen from being able to show their full potential. These ants were weaker in a one-on-one fight with the goblins from the start, so in time, they were pushed back and forced to flee.

When Gi Gu saw the antmen start running, he ordered the goblins to chase after them.

The antmen didn’t want to lose the things they had captured, so they ran as they protected their prized belongings at the center of their formation.

Gi Gu ordered the fast among them to chase after the antmen, while he staged an attack from both flanks. Gi Gu’s attacks became even fiercer.

“Great brother, the ants, have run!”

“They ran! They ran!”

“Spoils, secured!”

The three brothers danced with joy while Gi Gu nodded with satisfaction.

Gi Gu looked toward the spoils and muttered to himself, “Nu... Handling these won’t be easy, but at least, I’ll have some unique souvenirs for the king...”

Gi Gu ordered the goblins to carefully carry the spoils, then they continued their march to the north again.



I had asked the priestess and chief of the Gordob Goblins, Kuzan, to search the Fortress of the Abyss' basement. When that search was nearing completion, I called her over and told her of my plans.

I told her that I intended to respond positively to the elven school and offered to send her.

"I... Still have something I can do!" Kuzan stretched herself tall as she said that.

It was a charming sight, but this is important.

"It would be troubling if you were satisfied with your current state. The Gaidga have increased their numbers, the Paradua have strengthened their warriors, and the Ganra have started developing new technology... Do you understand what I'm saying?"

"...Your Majesty wishes for the Gordob to aim higher."

I nodded, and Kuzan looked down to the ground.

"Your Majesty," Yellow said. "If I may express myself..."

"Speak," I implored him.

"Are you unhappy with our chief, Kuzan?" He asked.

"Why would I be?" I asked.

"It seemed as if we weren't needed anymore," he said.

The Gordob was a tribe of small goblins. They were clearly the most different of the four goblin tribes. They were a tribe wholly unsuited for battle, making them conspicuously different.

Not only were these goblins weak in battle, they were also few in numbers.

Though they were currently in charge of managing the Fortress of the Abyss, if some other goblin were to surpass them, they would eventually lose their position. A tribe who couldn't fight needed to find a path to survival.

If they were to lose my protection, their tribe would collapse in one fell swoop.

“Kuzan is a gentle child. She only refused because of the tribe, please, Your Majesty, please be lenient on her,” Yellow said as he prostrated himself.

“O king, our king, if I may be so bold, please tell us that you still need us!” Yellow said.

I looked at her.

She was still crestfallen, but I could see the anxiety hidden in her eyes as she waited for my answer.

“Kuzan...”

“We are a fragile race.”

I see. She must’ve been thinking all this time what it was she could do as chief, while the other tribes progressed.

Her worries must’ve gotten worse gradually as well. After all, with the twin-headed snake she worshiped gone, she and her tribe truly only had me left.

It seems I haven’t been very considerate.

“Don’t worry, I don’t intend to abandon the Gordob Tribe. At the very least, so long as I am king, I will ensure that there is a way for you to show your loyalty.”

Kuzan and Yellow bowed.

“In that case, I shall accept the king’s command,” Yellow said.

With that I decided on Kuzan and Gi Do Buruga – who was already in the village anyway – as the goblins who would be enrolling.

Chapter 149: Ally Movement

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	72
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (The goddess)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

In an unusual turn of events, the koro dwarves visited me in the fortress. Apparently, the search for black iron ore in the cave has been going smoothly, so they decided to forge a prototype weapon. Their visit today was to show me that prototype.

“King of Goblins, I present to you...” The representative koro dwarf bowed his head as he respectfully presented to me a long sword.

It was a lustrous blade with its balance perfectly aligned at the center.

“Well made. How many can you make in a day?” I asked.

The dwarves talked among themselves, then the representative turned to me with a frown as he bowed. “Unfortunately, we can make no more than two a day.”

Two swords, that was far too few. But considering the manufacturing process

and the number of koro dwarf smiths, two swords is probably the most they could make.

In fact, when you think about their circumstances, it's actually a lot.

"In that case, forge a weapon every day and use the rest of the time to teach the centaurs and the Ganra your craft."

If the centaur and the Ganra could learn to forge, the number of weapons we could produce would also increase.

So long as the ore – the fuel so to speak – can keep up, the number of weapons produced should rise greatly.

"If you have any requests..."

The koro dwarves bowed their head and promised to cooperate.

I was pretty much asking them to hand out their secrets, there was no way they would happily comply. Fortunately, the elven school turned out to be an attractive bait.

The koro dwarves have never been given the opportunity to enter the elven school, so they were willing to close their eyes to the small disadvantage they would incur by teaching the Ganra and the centaur.

"I look forward to your work."

As I said that, I dismissed them and welcomed Gilmi.

"It's been a while, Your Majesty. I've come to report the completion of the beacon you've asked to be built."

The Ganra were the most handy among the goblins, so I ordered their hero, Gilmi Fishiga, to construct me a beacon that will let us know when the enemy is attacking.

"How is it?" I asked.

"It was difficult to see from the Fortress of the Abyss, so I built another one at the village of Ganra. My apologies for taking action on my own," Gilmi said.

I had asked him to build it at the cave where Gi Go once lived in, but apparently, it was difficult to see from here.

To think that he was able to ascertain the purpose behind the beacon and was able to take steps to meet that goal, as expected of Gilmi, he is indeed someone you can rely on.

“You’ve done well. I will be relying on Ganra for the days to come,” I praised.

“We shall do anything if it is for the king,” Gilmi replied.

As I watched Gilmi leave, the next goblin to appear before me was the goblin I’d permitted to build a village, the ancient beast tamer, Gi Gi Orudo.

Apparently, something has gone awry, for his brows were furrowed.

Gi Gi knelt before me. “My liege, please hear the request of this one, Gi Gi Orudo.”

Apparently, the female goblins refused to approach his village out of fear of the stench coming from the beasts he’d brought.

To remedy that, Gi Gi thought if he could have female goblin children raised in his village from the start, they would get used to it and not fear it.

The beasts were certainly a new addition, so the female goblins who were unfamiliar with them must’ve been stressed. As a result, no children were being born in his village. Gi Gi’s request is reasonable.

“Very well. I must’ve inconvenienced you greatly for failing to notice. You may take 10 children with you,” I said.

Gi Gi excitedly bowed his head and withdrew.

At long last, I was able to take a breather.



When Ra Gilmi Fishiga returned, he requested an audience with Princess Narsa. Though still only a rare class, Princess Narsa was the chief of Ganra Village and Gilmi’s childhood friend.

Gilmi was deeply indebted to Princess Narsa’s father, Gilan, so he always looked after her.

“I have fulfilled the king’s mission, thus, I have returned,” Gilmi said.

Though they were childhood friends, Princess Narsa felt something more than

that of sibling love for the revered hero, Gilmi, but she hid those feelings within as she generously bowed to him.

“I hear you did spectacularly. Well done,” Princess Narsa said.

Gilmi passed on what the king had told him. When he lifted his head, he looked toward the influential goblins of Ganra.

The chief, Princess Narsa; the warrior, Ru Rou; and the recently rising goblin, Re Roen.

These three goblins each came from different families, each responsible for the production and manufacturing of the goblin bows.

A goblin called out from these influential people, it was the goblin skilled at manufacturing, Re Roen.

“So the koro dwarves will be teaching us the method to forge iron, but how shall we pick who will learn among us?”

That was a question pointed to Gilmi and Princess Narsa.

Princess Narsa thought for a moment before answering. “I do not wish to be partial, have every family send out two goblins.”

Princess Narsa heaved a sigh of relief when she saw Gilmi nod to her, then she looked back on these influential goblins.

When she saw Roen and Rou bowing their heads, she concluded the meeting.

After the meeting, the two childhood friends spent some time together.

They talked about various things such as the state of the surrounding territories, the trend in the king’s court, and the other things they thought worthy of concern as they decided on Ganra’s future course.

“It’s the king’s command, we have to obey,” Gilmi said.

Currently, they were talking about Ganra’s dedication to building stone arrows and leather armor.

“The king never ceases to amaze me. It seems as if he’s always thinking one step ahead of us... Because of that, all our preparation went to naught,” Narsa said with a tinge of loneliness to her voice.

Gilmi corrected her. “No, that probably won’t be the case.”

Narsa’s curious eyes prompted Gilmi to continue.

“The production of iron armor will take some time. It won’t be possible to outfit every warrior with them at the king’s appointed date. Moreover, iron armor is heavy and difficult to use,” Gilmi said.

For Ganra, who was responsible for supporting from the back, the lighter and easier to handle leather armors were much more preferable.

“You mean!?” Narsa exclaimed with a smile as she realized what Gilmi was getting at.

“Even with the koro dwarves and the Ganra working together, the demand for leather armor should remain high for a while. The princess’ decision was not a mistake,” Gilmi said.

It was the first order Princess Narsa had given out to help the king. Naturally, she was happy that it wasn’t for naught.

Seeing her happy, Gilmi smiled too. At the same time, he decided to sound out the king’s intentions after seeing the progress of the iron equipment.



The famous chief of the harpies, Yushika, presented a proposition to the collective demihuman body known as the ‘Eight Flags’.

After the king requested to build inns, the idea to connect the various villages with roads suddenly came to mind.

According to her proposition, her race will seek out the shortest route from the skies, while the centaurs, the rizalat (long-tailed), and the minotaurs will clear out the forest and transported the lumber. After the path was clear, the tarpidae (mud-scales), the araneae, and the papirsag (shell tribe), will be responsible for building the road, while the fang and the goblins stood guard.

Yushika burned with passion as she tried to persuade the tribes. That serious appearance of hers was truly unlike her usually languid appearance.

“Trade between our races will explode if we can get this done! Our country will progress by leaps and bounds!”

Gurfia, whose dreams ended prematurely, and Daizos, who sacrificed himself to repay the elves. There was no better time than today if they were to ever realize the dreams of their late comrades, Yushika persuaded.

Persuaded by her zeal, the Eight Flags decided to build the roads. They would build them from the goblin's headquarters all the way to the elven village. It was an enormous undertaking.

"You're working hard," a voice said.

When the meeting ended, someone said that to Yushika. When she turned around, she noted that it was the araneae, Nikea.

It was her race who allied themselves with the goblins first, and it was also her who stood at the vanguard in the elven unification war.

"Really?" Yushika said to her friend, playing dumb.

Nikea asked with emphasis, "Has the Goblin King influenced you?"

"Maybe." Yushika wryly smiled and Nikea returned it. "But it's true that it's for the glory of my race and the Eight Flags..."

"You're doing this for our late friends, aren't you?" Nikea asked.

Yushika tried to brush her off by laughing, but then she went silent and started speaking of an old friend. "I'm sure Daizos would feel vexed if he were alive."

Nikea agreed. "Enough to regret dying."

The two wryly smiled, then Nikea excused herself and left.

"Regret it, Daizos. Because now that you're gone, there's nothing else you can do but watch," Yushika said, criticizing her old friend. But though her words seemed sharp, there wasn't a hint of ill will in them.



The great elven village of the west, Gastair. It was a village ruled by old Falun, a brilliant elf who wouldn't lose even to the famed and heroic Shure of Forni.

The elves were in the middle of carrying out their big project, the elven school.

In the past, the elven school had only taken in students from the various villages of the sylph, never once opening its doors for the other races, but at Falun's suggestion, that had changed.

Demihumans, koro dwarves, elves, and even goblins were now being accepted.

Falun himself was in charge of managing the school. In it they taught all sorts of subjects such as language, geography, history, math, and magic.

Falun personally picked out the teachers from the elves and the teaching material from the elven libraries.

Except for the meals, which the students had to deal with, the school was extremely generous and accommodating, even going as far as to provide a room for every student.

Moreover, even the students themselves could decide how long they would be studying. It was truly the best environment for studying.

Anyone who saw the elven village for the first time would find their hometowns inferior, what with its showy civilization, the blooming flowers, and the gentle light of the sun that made even the splashes of water sparkle.

"This is amazing, Kuzan..."

The little koro dwarf girl, who accompanied Kuzan, opened her eyes wide the moment she saw the village. Meanwhile, the other koro dwarf was speechless as she looked up at the great elven village.

Even when compared to Forni and Symphoria, the great elven village of Gastair was a league above. After all, old Falun had poured his life into raising up Gastair, making it the most prosperous village even among the sylphs.

If even the elves themselves could be left dumbfounded, what more of the other races?

"You've arrived. Welcome," old Falun said as he welcomed these exchanged students, starting with Kuzan.

"My name is Kuzan! From the Fortress of the Abyss!"

Compared to the two koro dwarves who had lost themselves in their

astonishment, Kuzan was able to properly respond to Falun.

“I am Falun Gastair. I shall be responsible for everyone for the days to come. It is a pleasure to meet all of you,” Falun said.

“The pleasure is ours!” The students replied.

As Falun led the students, the school life of these young students had finally begun.

—152 days until the war with the humans.

Chapter 150: The Wind from the South

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	72
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (The goddess)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

The patrolling goblins who were also in charge of securing food ran to me with bubbles coming out of their mouth.

“Your Highness, a great horde of goblins is coming from the south!”

As soon I received that report, I took flamberge out and ran.

“Gi Ga! Fei! Gather your men now!”

As I led the remaining goblins of the fortress, I remembered that the Gaidga and the Paradua goblins were situated in the south.

The Gaidga perhaps, but there was no way Paradua would forget to inform us that an enemy horde was coming.

The fact they weren’t able to could only mean that they’ve been surrounded or...

I hope they’re safe.

As I prayed for their safety, the enemy horde came to view and I tightened my grip on my great sword.

About 50 meters from where I stood was a great horde. A lone goblin stepped out of it, and as soon as I saw that goblin's face, I was shocked.

As I approached that duke class goblin, he drew his long sword and thrust it into the ground, then he got on one knee, bowed his head, and extended his arms in front of his chest with his right hand closed and fit into his open left hand. It was his unique way of expressing his gratitude.

"I have returned, Your Highness!"

When the goblin horde saw Gi Gu Verbena kneel, they all knelt before me.

The sight of all the goblins kneeling before me was the fruits of Gi Go's hard work. He has literally put together a great horde and brought it back with him.

When Fei and his elven warriors arrived, they cried in surprise. Meanwhile, Gi Ga and his horde let out a great cheer.

"Gi Gu Verbena," I called.

"Yes, my lord!" He said.

"You've conquered the south?" I asked.

"As you have commanded, Your Majesty," he replied.

When I realized the extent of Gi Gu's accomplishment, I inadvertently narrowed my eyes.

"Is there anything you wish?" I asked.

"There is no greater reward than to be able to help his majesty in his path to world domination," he replied.

"Then I shall give you command over the first army of the coming war. I will be expecting great things from you."

"As you command, my liege. I will do my best to not shame your name," Gi Gu said as I nodded, but then he brought another subject up. "Your Majesty, actually, I've brought a present."

"Oh?" I said.

As Gi Gu signaled his subordinates, they brought out some humans wrapped in reeds.

“My liege, I present to you a human we found in the southern region. I thought he might be of some service to his highness.”

Several humans were brought before me, a vine firmly wrapped around their mouths in place of a ball gag. Altogether, there were three men and one woman. They looked unlike any human I’ve seen, and the clothes they wore were too extravagant for a band of travelers.

They could simply be rich people, or perhaps merchants, but... Isn’t their skin a bit too pale?

“Did these people have any luggage with them?”

“No, we acquired them after exterminating a race known as ‘killer ants’. I don’t believe there was anything of the sort.”

I looked at the humans once more.

Their pale faces were stricken with horror. When I looked under their robes, I found that they were in possession of some bracelets, some ornaments they burned time on, and a book.

It’s a pity that I couldn’t read, but from the way these people reacted, it would seem that this book was the most important of their belongings.

We’re not getting anywhere like this.

“Undo that man’s gag,” I commanded.

I had the slender man with the most extravagant clothing on him to be sat before me.

“You are—” I couldn’t even finish my sentence before the man started yapping.

“How dare you people treat me like this!?” The man said, causing the long-armed goblins to surround him and pin him down.

“I am the cardinal of Cultidian, Benem Nemush! Monsters who do not fear god! Know that the gravity of your sins wi—”

Unable to withstand the man's jeers any longer, the goblins hit the man, causing his jeers to turn into screams instantly.

I glanced at the goblins, signaling them to stop, and they fearfully bowed in compliance.

I spoke to the man. "Unfortunately, who you are is no business of mine. You are now within our lands. Your laws, your logic... none of them have any power here. Prepare yourself."

Nemush and the rest of the humans looked down on the ground as their bodies shook in fear.

"Gi Gu, you have brought me something interesting. I will be sure to reward you properly for this one day," I said.

"...Yes, my lord!"

I ordered the humans to be brought to a nearby village.

I figure it would be easier to talk if they were brought there instead of the fortress.

Besides, there's no reason for us to give them free information.

After I left Gi Ga in charge of the fortress during my absence, I dismissed the mobilization order I'd sent out, then I took Fei and Gi Gu with me to the Gaidga village.



Presently, we were in the middle of an 'interrogation', or at least that's what I would have called our current activity, but this self-proclaimed cardinal has been running his mouth from the start.

Apparently, this man was a follower of the Kushain faith, and was on his way to the free cities in the south to attend the conclave that would decide their next patriarch.

I asked him why he was walking in the middle of a forest like this, and apparently, his faith was so great that he believed that the monsters would not attack him. Moreover, the other cardinals seemed to have coaxed him to pull off this crazy stunt.

According to the other humans, this man, Nemush, was of particularly high rank, and was even close to the position of patriarch. He was currently in fierce competition with two other candidates.

Supporters of Kushain were particularly numerous among the free cities or the city states. Especially, the agricultural northern city states.

“What will you do once you’ve become the patriarch?” I asked.

“That’s not really a topic to be had with a lesser life form, but fine! When I become the patriarch, I shall call for a holy war! A crusade!”

Oh?

Nemush’ eyes gleamed a tranced light as he spoke of his plans, and I looked coldly at him as I listened.

“The free cities of the south who do not acknowledge Kushain shall know the might of Kushain!”

I talked with these humans for one week.

There were some among them who were too scared to talk to me, but that was easily settled when I introduced the elf, Fei, to them.

Appearances really does matter, it seems.

It was doubtful that the humans were all telling the truth, but one thing was certain, the state of the free cities of the south.

The free cities were divided into two: the agricultural north and the south that traded with it. These city states have made their own alliances, creating a framework of sort that was known as the free city state county, but unification was still a long way away.

The north had kings, while the south had republics and many citizens. The north followed the teaching of Kushain, while the south worshipped the god of the desert, Ashunasan. Speaking of which, Kushain is apparently the name of a sage who once lived and is a monotheistic religion.

Moreover, aside from cultural and religious differences, the south traded with Germion Kingdom through Shushunu Holy Kingdom, even though the Germion Kingdom was currently pressuring the northern city states.

"I see..." I muttered as I listened to Fei's report.

I drew a map within my head as I sought to place the current position of the Forest of Darkness.

Will we make it before the conclave the starts? I wonder.

"Fei, elven metal is precious even among humans, right?" I asked.

"Yes. Why do you ask?" Fei said.

This sort of scheming doesn't suit me, but there shouldn't be any harm in scattering some seeds.

"Could I personally borrow some?" I asked.

Fei's eyes narrowed.

"...That is not a decision one would expect from the wise King of Goblins. Those people do not have the forbearance that could make others acknowledge them. If you are intent on supporting them, we may have to rethink our relationship."

Wise, huh. I feel that's not really an adjective you put on goblins, but whatever...

"Putting it bluntly, there isn't a hunter who would let his prey off when it willingly offers its head," I said.

"Are you saying you can use them?" Fei asked.

"The more incompetent leaders there are, the easier my path will be," I said. "Fei, though my heart yearns for danger, I will still charge on even if the wall has already collapsed."

"...I understand. We elves shall give our support as we always have."

Fei bowed and I nodded.

Now then, entertaining a fool is a hassle, but...



In the wide premises where the soldiers trained, 500 soldiers lined up so tightly that not even a drill could bore a hole in their formation.

Ever since the plan to fight the goblins in 2 years was decided, the feudal lord of the west, Gowen Ranid, has been gathering every soldiers he could muster to create his western army anew.

As Gowen divided the platoons, he looked down on the young soldiers and spoke loudly so they could hear him.

“Last year, our army suffered many losses and failed to invade the forest!”

The eyes of the young soldiers all gathered on the western feudal lord who stood imposingly.

“In the forest dwells monsters that are beyond our wildest imaginations. They stand in the way of progress. Moreover, should the day come when they leave the forest, they will surely raze your fields to the ground, kill your friends, take away your sisters and mothers, and kill your father and brothers!”

Gowen’s spirit bore down on these young soldiers as they listened with rapt attention.

“Stand tall, Soldiers! Yesterday, you were cowards! But from this day forth, you will be heroes! Guardians of this country! You will be given food! You will be given a weapon and armor! All of which have been paid for by the taxes paid by your parents! Therefore, you must win!”

There were some among the soldiers who cried. Their lives weren’t easy. It was precisely because of that that they aspired to be soldiers.

“Defeat the monsters and bring home victory!”

“To victory!” The crowd responded.

After distributing the soldiers to their platoons, they would be given training by their senior soldiers.

After seeing that everything was in order, the cold gleam returned to Gowen’s eyes and he returned to his office.

He dealt with the paperwork at a frightening pace, but when he came across one certain document, he suddenly stopped. It was a highly classified document that has been sealed with the imperial mark.

Gowen’s cheeks loosened a bit when he glanced through that document.

“Approximately, 400 soldiers at the capital.”

That was the number of reinforcements that could be sent in the coming year as soon as preparations were completed. Moreover, the holy knight Shivara might even make an appearance; the Ripper Knight, that was a holy knight who loved battles so much that he wouldn't be satisfied unless he led the charge. Not to mention, Gulland still owed him from the last battle.

“At most, we should have somewhere near 2000...”

Though Gowen said 2000, that was a number only achievable by gathering every single soldier from colonia and his fief. It wasn't very realistic. 1,800 was a more realistic figure.

There was a bit too many he had to protect.

That being the case, an attack would be best. But if he did attack, how should he go about it?

If the enemy base was that deserted town from before, he could try cutting away the forest until he reached it.

Alternatively, he could try and provoke the goblins out of the forest, then stop them with colonia (colonial city). He could use the reinforcements from colonia to catch the enemy in a surround, cutting off all paths of retreat, allowing him to completely annihilate the enemy in one go.

But, no... That Goblin King probably won't be fooled. It was doubtful he would move exactly as Gowen wished.

Considering there was someone who tried to attack during the night before, there was no such thing as being too careful. Another card Gowen could play was to temporarily abandon colonia, then trap the enemy within their territory, leaving them ripe for the chopping block.

But could the citizens endure such a plan?

In the vast plains, mobility was key. But unfortunately, Gowen was yet to find someone who could replace the late cavalry commander, Corseo. Gowen would prefer that everything went perfectly, but... With their current cavalry inexperienced, the deciding factor would end up being the weapons created by

the craftsmen.

Until enough was gathered, he would have to be thorough with the defense. Fortunately, the magicians given him by the king has greatly sped up colonia's progress.

If he could only have those mages under his direct command, he could have his very own sorcerer cavalry (mana guard) just like the eastern Holy Shushunu Kingdom, but unfortunately, they belonged to the king.

With the situation at hand, he had no choice but to rely on his old tactics.

"My lord, please excuse me," a voice said.

When Gowen looked up, a clerk was before him.

"State your business," Gowen said.

"It's... last time's..." the man said.

Gowen's eyes grew sharp.

Some religious groups have been wandering about in his territory lately. They tried to persuade his citizens to believe in just one god, and they even told him that everything would go fine as long as he contributed to their faith.

"...Let him come," Gowen said.

Sensing that his tone was heavier than normal, a chill crawled up the clerk's back.

When the person of the Kushain faith entered, he started running his mouth passionately without even waiting for Gowen to say anything.

No matter how splendid his god was, or how weak the other gods were, or whether this was a sin or not, the moment Gowen heard his request, he curtly replied. "You may not loiter in my territory. If I hear you ask the same worthless request again, at that time, it'll be your head."

The person from the Kushain faith complained, but when he tried to chase after Gowen, he suddenly heard the sound of him sheathing his sword.

"Huh?" The religious person asked.

Gowen obliged and pointed to his fingers. When he looked down, he noted

that his fingers were gone.

“...Huh!? E-Eeek!”

At first questioning, but when understanding came, pain settled in and the religious person fell to the floor.

Gowen approached the trembling man and slowly waved his sword, then he pointed it at his throat.

“I won’t say it again. Hurry up and get lost,” Gowen said.

After that Gowen called the government officials over and had them pick up the fallen fingers, then he sent out an edict.

“The Kushain faith is heresy. They will not be welcomed in my territory.”

They trembled and nodded as Gowen’s voice resounded.

“Also, this might be unnecessary, but inform the capital as well. Tell them that our country has no need for monotheism. We are a people protected by many gods!”

—142 days until the war with the humans.

Intermission: One Thousand Li to the North, a Meeting at Dawn

Status	
Name	Gi Go Amatsuki
Race	Goblin
Level	2
Class	Duke; Wandering Swordsman
Possessed Skills	Sword Mastery A-; Purple Flash; Forsake; Sense; Discern; A Master Swordsman's Proof; Silent Nature; Veteran
Divine Protection	Sword God
Attributes	None

Subordinate None
Beasts
Abnormal
Status Sworn to Spare; Sworn God's Control

Beyond the cave full of glowing moss, where the light of the fire god’s body shone brilliantly up in the sky, the former slave, Yoshu’s, eyes were blinded by the great light.

He implored the goblin walking ahead of him, Gi Go Amatsuki, to stop, but the goblin waved him off.

“It’s fine,” the goblin said.

Seeing the goblin walk unguarded, Yoshu followed after him as he thought of a plan in case things turned for the worst.

“Lord Gi Go!”

A great horde of beasts was accompanying a goblin that looked to be a noble class.

From what Yoshu recalled, this goblin was none other than Mr. Gi Gi.

Beasts of all sorts frolicked about around him.

Yoshu asked if it was safe, and Gi Go told him it was with a glance.

“Normally, people would be a bit more surprised, but...” Yoshu said.

When Yoshu got a closer look, he noticed that there were some monkey-like animals mixed with the horde who would either feed the young or scratch each others backs. It was a peaceful scene; at least, as long as he did not look through those lenses called prejudice that humans had of beasts.

Gi Go received something from Gi Gi, then they bid each other farewell.

Yoshu wasn’t close to Gi Gi, so he quickly followed after Gi Go.

“You sure are close,” Yoshu remarked as they followed a distinct beast trail up to the north, most probably a trail left by Gi Gi’s beast horde.

“Our relationship is actually one where we’re one misstep away from killing each other,” Gi Go said.

“Didn’t look like that to me...” Yoshu said.

“...Before I met the king a kind of beast known as ‘gray wolf’ wreaked havoc on my turf,” Gi Go said.

Yoshu and the goblin walked while paying attention to their surroundings.

“Half the horde had been done in and we couldn’t hunt. We were left with only two choices: either starve to death or eat each other. But then the king came.”

Gi Go’s voice was heavy. Was that regret weighing upon him or something else? Yoshu did not know.

“Hungry and weak, I was mercilessly beaten by Gi Gi and Gi Gu. I didn’t even have the opportunity to stand before the king,” Gi Go said.

“It was vexing, wasn’t it?” Yoshu asked.

“...Perhaps,” Gi Go said.

As they continued along their path, their feet began to make slushing sounds.

“Since that day I’ve been keeping something locked up within me. That something was with me even on that day I gave Gi Gi food as proof of our friendship...”

Gi Go continued talking, but as he did, Yoshu was more and more surprised.

The sword is my way of life.

Yoshu had always believed Gi Go to be completely devoted to the sword.

But now... It seemed that this goblin was actually more human than he ever imagined.

The atmosphere along the way was so heavy that Yoshu even stopped feeling his legs as he walked.

Perhaps this was the reason why Gi Go was taken by the Sword God’s madness.

“A swamp,” Gi Go said as he looked down.

In the dimly lit forest that remained dim despite the body of the fire god

shining from the sky was a swamp abundant with strange water plants.

It didn't seem they would be able to cross.

"Shall we go around?" Yoshu suggested.

There was more than one path to the north.

After leaving the forest, the northern mountains of the snow god that blocked the heavens came to view.



The body of the fire god had yet to set, but they were making camp already. The dark of the night was irrelevant to goblins, but to a human like Yoshu, it was a difficult time to work. Normally, the twin red moon sisters would light the dark sky during the black of the night god, but unfortunately, the clouds today veiled their light.

Gradually, the god of the night and his household's goddesses began to stretch their wings.

Yoshu looked hatefully at the oppressive clouds that covered the sky.

It seemed like it might rain, so they decided to make camp at the border of the forest and the plains. Yoshu would always put up a cloth between the trees to protect themselves from the watch of the night birds, but today, he added another layer.

After setting up the tent, Yoshu gathered some aged branches and lit them up.

It wasn't easy because of all the vegetation growing, but Yoshu made sure to pick a camping site that was slightly sloped. After all, it would be horrible if it flooded and they were swept away while they were sleeping.

"This should do," Yoshu said as he finished making camp.

In the same moment – almost as if Gi Go was waiting – Gi Go came out of the thickets with two big eyes in hand.

The pattern of a giant eye drawn on the birds' feathers looked menacing as it seemed to look straight at Yoshu, but he ignored it and spoke to Gi Go.

“Looks like you caught a lot today,” Yoshu said.

“There seems to be a lot in these parts,” Gi Go said.

Yoshu took the prey from Gi Go and strangled them.

After killing the beasts, Yoshu started gutting them. He had already gotten used to the whole process, so much so that his hands moved even without thinking.

After lopping off the heads of the big eyes and draining their blood, Yoshu started plucking their feathers and removing the internal organs.

The big eyes stored poison within them, and any human that ingested it would be out with a high fever for a few days. The goblins and the orcs had a natural resistance to it, however.

To adventurers the biggest reason for gutting these big eyes was to get the monster crystal that sometimes crystallized within.

Of the beasts that had monster crystals inside of them, the big eyes were relatively weaker, making them a prime choice for adventurers.

Of course, the amount of magic crystals inside them was also less, making the rewards smaller, but to the adventurers who were struggling to get by, the big eyes were an indispensable source of income.

“I’m not an adventurer though...” Yoshu muttered.

Yoshu wiped the monster crystal clean and stored it in his bag. He couldn’t just leave it on the ground as it might attract other beasts.

He ran his knife along the bones, cutting off the meat of the beast, then he took a sharpened rod, pierced the meat with it, and cooked it over fire.

The fragrant scent of meat being cooked was accompanied by the sound of fat bursting.

The sight of a little fat falling into the flames as the meat was cooked greatly whet Yoshu’s appetite.

As a finishing touch, Yoshu took the rock salt he got from the village a few days ago and shaved it with a knife, then he sprinkled some on the meat.

“I’ll have one,” Gi Go said as he excitedly bit into the meat. Sounds of juice slushing resounded as the juice of the meat filled Gi Go’s mouth. Some of it even spilled onto the ground.

“Delicious,” Gi Go said.

“I’m glad you like it,” Yoshu said, smiling a little, then he started eating.

Contrast the crunchy exterior, the meat inside was soft and his teeth was easily able to tear it apart.

“Yep, it’s good alright,” Yoshu said as he nodded with satisfaction.

It’s often said that people will naturally smile when eating good food. It seems that was true indeed, even for goblins.

After eating Yoshu started teaching Gi Go how to sing. He had promised him some time ago, but it was too dangerous in the dungeon, so he had postponed it until now.

“What kind of songs do you like? Songs for battle, perhaps?” Yoshu asked.

There were all sorts of songs. There were songs that spoke of one’s homeland, ones that spoke of the seasons, ones that spoke of love, or extolled bravery or even spoke of war.

It was a rare sight to see Gi Go ponder on something, but when he finally opened his mouth, he asked Yoshu to teach him a song that thought back to one’s home.

“That’s unexpected,” Yoshu remarked.

“Really? I’m always fighting, so I can say I know war, but a place to go back to? There’s only one such place now... So, if there is a song that talks about home, I’d like to know it,” Gi Go explained.

“A place to go back to, huh?” Yoshu said.

Did he have that? Yoshu wondered.

Closing his eyes, he saw the image of his older sister appear.

Yoshu wryly smiled at that.

I’m alright, sis. I’m doing a lot better than expected.

Yoshu wryly smiled at his worrying sister, then he cleared his throat and began to sing.

“Can you remember the old lands? O winds of the vast sky, take these feelings with you. I wonder if the water flowing in the rivers came from the rain in the old lands. Mother mountain, snowy mountain, misty mountains of the north.

(Kyanmarordo rinbaru habekasutoria vesjinichi ukeru habeireria kyanrashiruudo chiukeinrei. Dinarashir, yuuguranshiru, iryunoshisurashiru.)”

Gi Go quietly listened as Yoshu sang.

“When I turn around I see the path back home. Friends of a strange land, won’t you scatter my ashes on the mountains of my homeland, where I can no longer return? In that land whose air I breathed growing up. In that land whose rain I cried under and whose snow I kicked and ran. Mother mountain, snowy mountain, misty mountains of the north.

(hadomerieddo kyanroroodo rao ishuneyuuga. Ragiirakyanmibadia. Nonmuukyandou. Katouraragiirun, uauwa, yuguerin. Dinarashiru, yuuguranshiru, iryunoshisurashiru.)”

Though goblins couldn’t cry, the mournful melody left its mark on Gi Go’s heart.

“...A good song,” Gi Go remarked.

“Yes, a good song indeed,” Yoshu agreed.

Yoshu wryly smiled as he sat before the flames thinking of his sister.

As they walked further up north, the temperature gradually grew lower and the mountains of the snow god became bigger. Because the winds blew down from the mountains, the cold they felt was colder than the actual temperature of the area. This sort of wind was popularly known as the breath of Yggrasil (snow god). It was because of it that this land remained cool even in the heat of summer, making it a treasure trove of produce that could only grow in the cold.

The traveling pair of goblin and human looked at the large fields as they

passed them by. These fields were so big that Yoshu himself couldn't help but grow wide eyed. In fact, the fields were so big they were a lot closer to a city than a simple town.

The bigger the village, the more people there were and the more shops there were. A bigger town was usually preferable as far travelers were concerned, but when Yoshu thought of Gi Go, he thought a small town would be better instead.

While Yoshu was worrying about that, Gi Go was particularly taken by the white thing coming out of his mouth.

"What's the matter?" Yoshu asked.

"Something white is coming out of my mouth," Gi Go said.

Yoshu couldn't understand what Gi Go was talking about, so the goblin exhaled deeply to show him what he meant.

"What's happening to my body?" Gi Go asked anxiously.

"That's pretty normal though," Yoshu said, then he took a deep breath and exhaled as well, drawing a white puff of breath in the space before his mouth.

"But this has never happened before," Gi Go said.

When Gi Go said that, Yoshu finally understood.

"Ahh, could it be this is your first time visiting a cold place?" Yoshu asked.

"Cold? Ahh, it's indeed colder here," Gi Go said.

Yoshu wryly smiled and patted him on the shoulder. "Don't worry about it. It's normal for that white thing to come out in cold places."

Since this was Gi Go's first time, he's probably never seen snow either. Yoshu secretly anticipated how Gi Go would react once he saw it.

"Hmm..." As for Gi Go, since the only thing that changed was the color of his breath, he stopped bothering himself about it and followed after Yoshu.

When it was almost time for them to make camp, Yoshu spotted a village. It was a little big, but it wasn't the sort of village soldiers would station themselves in.

It was a wealthy village.

“Luck seems to be on our side today. We might be able to stay here,” Yoshu said.

“Hmm...” Gi Go agreed without paying much attention as his eyes darted to and fro his surroundings.

When Yoshu started to leave him behind, he followed after him.



After negotiating for a while, Gi Go and Yoshu were able to successfully stay at the village chief's place. The negotiations went as usual. Yoshu did the talking, while Gi Go quietly waited with his features covered by a long robe.

“I don't think I can ever get used to human houses,” Gi Go said.

After entering the chief's stable, Gi Go took off his robe and laid himself over the straw bed. He ignored the frightened horses as he slept with his sword in hand.

Goblins might be able to move freely be it day or night, but it was still important that he remained alert at all times. And though his body was a lot tougher than Yoshu's, making him significantly less tired despite having to walk an entire day without rest, Gi Go still felt some fatigue.

When it came to fatigue, there was no better treatment than sleep.

“...Hmm.”

Gi Go closed his eyes, eager to greet slumber land, but for some reason its doors refused to open.

He was tired, so he definitely needed to sleep, but then he thought back to that thing that caught his attention before entering the village.

There were several beings around the village. The feeling he sensed from those beings was much like the greed he felt from orcs when they hunted their prey. But this was a human village. Could it be that even a place like this wasn't free of such things?

Gi Go tried to shake the thought away.

But no matter how hard he tried, sleep wouldn't come.

It wasn't easy for a goblin to ignore threat when he knows he's being

threatened. For a goblin to ignore a threat was to go against instinct itself.

If one is being targeted, then one should run.

If the enemy is weaker, then that enemy should be defeated.

There was no such thing as 'waiting'.

And so, Gi Go stood up and walked out into the black of the night god covered in the darkness of the goddess of darkness.

"Where are you going?" A voice called out to him from behind.

When he turned around, it was Yoshu.

"You were awake?" Gi Go asked.

"I don't fall asleep easily," Yoshu explained with a wry smile, though he already had a shield on his back and a sword in hand.

"Good then. There's an enemy. Come with me for a bit," Gi Go said.

"Good grief," Yoshu complained. He still followed Gi Go, however.

When they got out, what greeted them was a group of bandits and neighing horses.

"This is what you'd call a bandit group," Yoshu explained.

Yoshu couldn't help but smile faintly when he realized there were about 50 of them all in all.

"That's a lot," Gi Go said.

"Yeah, but bandits aren't really about numbers," Yoshu said.

As Yoshu took out his shield, he drew his sword.

"I don't sense anyone strong, but with this many, it shouldn't be too boring," Gi Go said.

Goblins were friends of the dark. Gi Go could see perfectly clear even without the torches that illuminated the area. As for Yoshu, he found the torches convenient for sizing up the enemy.

"Amateurs," Yoshu said with a cruel smile as he hid under the shadow of a building and searched his shield for a dagger.

When the bandits began to ride over the fences, he threw it at them.

The dagger smoothly cut through the air as it penetrated a man's throat. In the blink of an eye, without even leaving an opportunity to cry in death, one bandit fell from his horse.

Yoshu threw a few more daggers.

The bandits did not fail to notice the oddity of the situation, and they looked for the person responsible for the death of their comrades. When they pinpointed Yoshu's location, they charged straight at him.

"You're asking to die!" A bandit yelled as he and his men rode for Yoshu.

Yoshu, however, didn't seem to mind as he threw three more daggers to claim three more lives, but it wasn't enough to stop the bandits' charge.

Yoshu ran into the stable to avoid the bandits from chasing him with their horses.

As a result, the bandits surrounded the stable.

"You bastards dare have a hard time with this rat!?" The biggest of the bandits spat. He said that in the same moment Yoshu shrugged his shoulders.

"These flames I offer to you! (Burning Sword)" Yoshu chanted.

Flames wrapped around the sword in his hands, making it look like it was struck by lightning as the fire ran through it. The sword in his hands was now sharper and stronger than ever.

"Careful now," Yoshu said.

As the battle commenced within the stable, Yoshu was able to dodge the attacks by a hair's breadth. Unfortunately, there were too many bandits, making it harder and harder for him to dodge.

—This is bad!

When Yoshu couldn't dodge any longer, he braced himself for pain.

But the pain never came, and instead, a curved sword was brandished before him, stopping the blade of the enemy.

"Mr. Gi Go! What about the bandits on your side?" Yoshu asked with both

relief and anticipation.

“They’ve been dealt with,” Gi Go replied.

The plan was for Gi Go to take care of the bandits that tried to run away from the entrance, but it seems he had managed to finish his part sooner. The robe Gi Go wore had already been cut up because of the battle.

Without the robe’s hood concealing his face, the bandits could clearly see his face.

“M-Monster!” They cried.

Unfortunately, their fear only made them easy pickings for Yoshu and Gi Go, who mercilessly struck them down one after another. Whenever Gi Go swung his sword, the bandits would lose their arms and fall over, while Yoshu’s sword was so sharp it could penetrate even their armor.

“S-Save us!” The bandits cried as they ran.

When dawn came, most of them had either been killed or captured.

Yoshu and Gi Go handed them to the village people.

The villagers screamed when they saw Gi Go, but Yoshu calmed them down by explaining that he was an honest monster swordsman.

The villagers were deeply grateful to Yoshu and Gi Go, so they paid them some money. They even gave them some fur coats and winter shoes to stave off the cold when they found out they were headed to the snow god’s mountains. They also gave them some preserved food and fire spirit stones that could light a fire even without any branches.

Yoshu and Gi Go thanked the villagers, then they headed further up to the north.



Gi Go could not get used to the sensation he felt from his feet. From the moment he was born until adulthood, he has never worn a pair of shoes. To make things worse, the snow-covered land would cave ever step he took.

“Tsk... It’s hard to move here,” Gi Go said.

He tried swinging his curved sword, but it was difficult to control his weight in these snow-covered lands. The more strength he put in his feet, the further his feet sunk into the snow.

Gi Go's dislike for shoes only grew worse under this situation. Not only was he unable to keep a firm posture, his feet were even caged in a small object. That being said, he couldn't just remove them either. After all, even goblins were susceptible to frostbite.

"Nuu..." Though puzzled, Gi Go tried swinging his sword again.

Try and try as he might, however, he could not swing his sword as he pleased. There was supposedly a savage tribe here known as Yugushiva. From what he knew, they were a worthy opponent. But no matter how worthy they were, if he couldn't fight properly, he wouldn't be satisfied even in death.

"Mr. Gi Go, it seems a blizzard is coming. We should rest inside this cave," Yoshu said.

When the body of the fire god was at its peak, Yoshu happened to find a cave in the mountains. He proposed to stay there.

"That would probably be for the best," Gi Go agreed.

Leaving his winter equipment in the black cave that contrasted the snowy land, Gi Go began immersing himself in his sword once more. He has never experienced an environment where it was so difficult to swing his sword.

He sought to find an answer within as he swung his sword ceaselessly through the air.

A white breath left his mouth and vanished.

The trees were covered in snow, and the snowy lands that would usually appear rocky and uneven appeared perfectly level because of the snow. Gradually, the sun set and the clouds were cut apart by the powerful winds.

When the sun had gone far toward the west, clouds began to fill the sky.

"Hmm? Oh?"

When lumps of white began to fall from the sky, Gi Go curiously reached out for them, only for them to vanish in his sword-scarred hands.

“So this is snow,” he muttered.

The falling snow greatly fascinated Gi Go, but the winds gradually grew stronger, and the breath of the snow god began to breathe down from above, chilling Gi Go.

“Mr. Gi Go, aren’t you going to eat” Yoshu asked.

The once gentle snow had turned into a vicious weapon as they struck Gi Go on the cheeks.

Gi Go turned his back on the blizzard and entered the cave.

The next day, the sky was blue again. A man and a goblin packed up their belongings and left their cave. The cold of the wind would brush against their skin and a white cloud would exhale from their mouths as they climbed up the mountain.

By this time, Gi Go had finally gotten used to walking in the snow.

But just when Gi Go thought they would finally reach the summit, a person appeared before them.

The person wore a mask and had silver hair that fluttered in the air. The person wore a white fur coat and carried a curved sword just as big or perhaps bigger than Gi Go’s.

That person swung his sword with a reverse grip.

The moment Gi Go saw that, he called out to Yoshu.

“From above!” He said.

Although they were on snowy lands, that person ran so quickly that it seemed like he was jumping.

The person ran with open hostility, but Gi Go welcomed him with a ferocious laugh.

“Yoshu, keep your head down!”

Gi Go stepped forward and brandished his curved sword to meet the enemy’s blade. Despite being on snowy lands, the enemy jumped easily, leaving a spray of snow as he unsheathed his sword and slashed down on him.

“Ronto, rio!” The enemy yelled in the northern language, drawing the curtains on their duel.

“NUuuOOO!” Gi Go met the enemy’s blade with his own.

Though the snow sought to shackle him, Gi Go returned the enemy’s blade.

The enemy was no slouch, however, and he used the momentum from having his blade returned to nimbly flip in the sky and easily regain his footing despite the snow.

In the unsinking snow lands was a powerful foe that fluttered like a butterfly.

A fierce smile appeared on Gi Go’s lips.

It was a smile reminiscent of his days when he was a mere starving monster.

“A worthy foe. Come, let’s fight!”

On that day, they met a yugushiva (snow demon).



Yoshu’s level has risen.

Chapter 151: Rite of Passage

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	72
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (The goddess)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

We left the Gaidga village and saw the cardinal Nemush until the border of the Forest of Darkness.

I left the monsters we encountered along the way to Gi Gu Verbena and his southern goblins, while Fei and I were completely focused on gathering as much information as we could.

Cardinal Nemush was headed to a city state of the northern part of the free cities known as Banen Kingdom. Apparently, they pick their king by election.

Being also the headquarters of the Kushain faith, it seemed to be a country deeply devoted to religion.

Apparently, the influence of the church there was so great that Nemush went as far as to say that without the adherents there would be no people.

“Don’t you have a king?” I asked.

Nemush laughed with a sneer as he said the king wasn’t a problem.

“The king himself is a follower of the Kushain faith. Moreover, not even the king himself can meet the patriarch just because he wishes to!” Nemush said.

I don’t know if he’s being talkative because he looks down on me for being a monster or simply because that’s how he is. Of course, there’s still a possibility that he’s lying, but I don’t think anyone is capable of coming up with such a complicated lie.

It’s a pity the evil eye of the one-eyed snake can’t discern truth from lie.

Because of that I have no choice but to rely on my own skills. It’s inconvenient, but when I think about how relying on a skill won’t get me that far anyway, I feel better.

I still haven’t found a path to victory. For now, there’s no choice but to fumble my way through.

We spent about 10 days all-in-all gathering information from Nemush, and then we finally arrived at the southern end of the forest.

There, a rocky desert of a wasteland where the air shimmered in heat and the hot sand scorched greeted us.

It was faint, but I could see the city-state from the distance.

“This is as far as we go,” I said.

We haven’t even fully understood the forest yet. Going out into the desert now was far too early. First, we must strengthen our stronghold.

“Before you go, take these with you. It’s a farewell gift. Let it pay your travel expenses and serve as a tribute to that god you speak of.”

I spoke as haughtily as I could to further cement my image as a foolish monster king to Nemush.

“So the teachings of Kushain can reach even monsters... Are you writing this down?” Nemush said to the other believers with him.

They must have been recording something, as the believers quickly wrote down something with a feather pen.

“I will gift you another treasure when you come to the forest again. I wish to

pay respects to that god of yours,” I said insincerely. I could barely keep myself from grinning.

If this man could gain power and wreak havoc in the south, the power of the humans will dwindle.

“I don’t think a monster could ever understand the teachings of Kushain, but at the very least, I’ll pray for you to have a peaceful death,” Nemush said.

“Farewell,” I said.

A peaceful death, huh. I couldn’t help but sneer at the thought as I turned heel.

Who wants a peaceful death?

What I want is to suffer and suffer more, a thorny road covered in blood.

I chose to walk such a path. Damn a peaceful death.

On the other side of all the pain and suffering, beyond the endless wars... What awaits me is probably...



We took the same amount of time to return to the Fortress of the Abyss. When we got back, Kuzan’s representative, Yellow, was waiting for us. I’d sent Kuzan to the elven school, so Yellow had to take over the search of the Fortress of the Abyss.

The old goblin and Yellow seemed to be working together, as they welcomed us together upon our return.

“My king, word has come from the elf, Lord Felbi,” the old goblin said.

The old goblin was in charge of the young and female goblins, and was unusually wise for a goblin.

It seems Felbi, Pale, Selena, and Shumea have all successfully infiltrated the western region. They’ve become adventurers to earn a living and are currently on their way to visit various places.

The west was under the rule of the soldier, Gowen Ranid. That should be the same man who swore a treaty with me.

It's doubtful that he's willing to keep that treaty, however, as he has been gathering and training a significant number of soldiers. In fact, he's apparently even willing to name an unknown adventurer an officer depending on his abilities. He's really thought things through.

It seems I'm not the only one who's been strengthening his forces and looking to expand territory.

"Forget the treaty. Is he planning on attacking?" I asked.

"So a war can't be avoided after all," Fei said.

"This land is too small for two rulers," I said.

Those who seek power will naturally collide with others with similar intentions. Besides, even if I did cut my ambitions short by only protecting this forest, one day, the humans will surely attack us anyway to feed themselves.

Hence, there can only be one path for me to take.

Capture the human kingdom, wage war against the world, and carve my existence into history.

"There's more," the old goblin said.

The next part of the message was closer to hearsay than something concrete. Word has it that the new leader of the Eastern Holy Shushunu Kingdom's sorcerer cavalry has been decided. There has also been news of a contagious disease spreading in the northern mountains of the snow god and Germion Kingdom paying large sums to any who can use healing magic. Finally, the conclave of the Kushain faith has apparently been opened.

It seems Nemush wasn't lying after all. It's curious what effects he'll have, but there's no telling until after I see it for myself.

"The enemy having a lot of healers is a problem," I said.

Ever since Reshia was kidnapped, we've had no choice but to recover our injuries through natural methods. Goblins reproduce faster and heal faster than humans, but compared to the powers of healing magic, those are nothing.

I don't know what the average effect of healing is, but if there are a lot of Reshias on the enemy's side, the battle will prove to be difficult.

“On the other hand, no one would expect the goblins to have any healers,” Fei pointed out.

I asked if the elves had any healers, and apparently, they had ways to speed up the recovery process but none to instantly recover from one’s injuries.

“The undine might have some, however,” Fei said.

Unfortunately, relations between the sylphs and the undine have been cut off due to the expansion of humanity. Getting their support before the next battle is unlikely.

I don’t know if it’s because the humans are inherently weak that they have developed more advanced healing magic, but regardless, that’s one big point in their favor.

From the map, the undine should be situated east of the Holy Shushunu Kingdom. With that distance and the current speed of communications, it won’t be easy to reach out to them.

I don’t think reaching out to them will change much, but it’s still better than not doing anything.

“Tell Felbi to continue communications,” I said.

“As you will,” the old goblin replied. “Speaking of which, Your Majesty, the paddock seem to have been completed.”

I’d asked the ancient beast tamer, Gi Gi Orudo, and the papirsag who are used to raising animals to build a paddock similar to the orcs.

I asked them to fill it with relatively tame animals, and as it turns out, they chose the triple boar.

“Isn’t that a monster?” I asked, causing Gi Gi to meekly nod while Luther of the papirsag nodded with satisfaction.

According to Luther, the triple boars were relatively tame despite being a monster. And as long as they were given enough land and their young weren’t touched, they could be raised easily.

Come to think of it, even beginner beast tamers are able to control them, so they should indeed be tame.

Sensing my anxiety, Gi Gi spoke. “Your Majesty, it is precisely because we beast tamers come into contact with monsters that we are able to train ourselves. We put our lives by doing so, but without it, we cannot grow.”

I glanced at Gi Gi, who was bowing deeply.

Somehow, I feel like I learned something new today.

Indeed, I might have been acting too cautious. The goblins need to learn to fend for themselves. I can’t baby them forever. And for beast tamers, handling beasts – or rather, monsters – is how they grow.

Even if they fail, they’ll be able to come up with new techniques as they fumble their way through.

“Very well then. Gi Gi, Luther, I grant you permission to do as you please,” I said.

After dismissing them, I listened to the rest of the reports.

The report from Gi Ji Arsil’s scouts; the report from the knight goblin, Gi Ga Rax, on the progress of the young goblins’ training; the report of the harpy, Yushika, on the progress of the inns and the roads. It wasn’t possible to manage everything, so I was only taking the reports of those close to me, but there was still a lot of work to be done.

I need to hurry up and establish my retainers’ organization.

I glanced at Fei, and he tilted his head in confusion.

“Is there something?” Fei asked.

“I feel like I finally understand Shure,” I said.

“You asked for this, though,” Fei said.

“I know,” I said.

Wryly smiling, I asked the next reports to be brought in.

If I have the time to complain, I might as well do my job.

I looked at the map and thought to myself.

On the map, there was a linchpin pierced on the entrance of the forest. That was the colonial city. North of that was the mountains of the snow god and in the south were the free cities. According to intel, Germion Kingdom and the southern city states are in conflict over their borders.

If Nemush could become the next patriarch, then things might change. I don't want to rely on just him, but if that holy war of his does happen, nothing would be better.

The reason I want the south in conflict is so that I don't have to worry about them allying themselves to Gowen during our battle.

I turned my gaze to the north.

A disease is spreading through the mountains of the snow god. That's probably because of their lack of hygiene if anything. I've never heard of goblins getting sick, but it would be terrible if we ended up passing the disease to humans after occupying a human settlement.

My goal is conquest not annihilation.

Perhaps I should have the goblins make a habit of washing themselves by the river.

Diseases can greatly weaken countries. It's not easy to solve them. It would be nice to have subordinates who could handle such things under me.

There are a lot of beasts. I wonder if Gi Gi could cause chaos in the north by driving them away to the north.

Gi Gi's beast horde should prove to be a powerful ally in any case. Of course, it depends on how cooperative they are, but they should be at least as strong or stronger than a hundred goblins.

There shouldn't be any problems in utilizing the beasts in the north.

I turned my gaze back to the south.

I acted friendly toward Nemush, but I wonder how effective that'll actually be?

Even if I want to wreak havoc on the human territories, it won't do to worsen Nemush' position after striking a bargain with him.

I wonder if they'll really fall into chaos without the goblins making an appearance...

I should probably talk to Gi Gi and Gi Gu.

As I looked down on the map, I moved my pieces against the invisible opponent I was facing.

Like this the Fortress of the Abyss greeted winter.

112 days until the war with the humans.

Chapter 152: A Confrontation with the Strong

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	72
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (The goddess)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

I added the necessary information on the stone-made map of the Fortress of the Abyss. That was a map that put together using Shure’s map and the information from the goblin scouts.

“To the south are killer ants and scarabs.”

According to Gi Gu Verbena of the wolf pack, the big players in the south are the orcs, the killer ants, and the scarabs.

Perhaps I could make use of them in the coming war.

The numerous killer ants with a force comparable to that of the southern goblins. The powerful scarabs who can’t fight for a long time.

Neither of them can easily be used. I suppose you could say they’re defective to some extent. I’d like to investigate more if possible, but it seems the coming war is going to be a lot bigger than expected.

I looked at the walls drawn on the map.

According to the ancient beast tamer, Gi Gi, who came from the north, there weren't any particularly strong forces there.

The north was apparently mostly a marsh rich with various beasts and vegetation.

To the west are the demihumans and the elves. We are currently allied and our relationship is going smoothly.

As for the humans to the east, they haven't made any move so far. The orc king, Bui, and his men are keeping an eye on the humans as well as acting as a breakwater in case they decide to attack. The kobolds led by Hasu are also situated to the east. They make their living by leeching off the orcs.

On top of that, we also have another base in Gi Go's old village, where I had a beacon built. It is being taken care of by the Ganra tribe and the water mage, Gi Bi, and the beast tamer, Gi Bu.

There had been no news of the south since dispatching the mad lion, Gi Zu Ruo, but that changed after Gi Gu Verbena returned.

Presently, it could be said that the south has calmed down.

Of course, that's a result brought about by Gi Gu's attempt to connect the scattered villages. The way he went about things allows one to quickly expand territory.

We have no rule in lands without goblins.

There are no goblins in the area near the southern desert. It is inhabited solely by the killer ants and the scarabs. There are no known predators in the area either.

I don't know how long this false peace with the humans will last, but I should consider sending a force to the south.

If we can reason with them, we'll talk, but if not, we'll break their legs and make them kneel. Either way they will serve my purpose.

It would be problematic, however, if the killer ants and scarabs end up becoming much bigger than expected. Taking on two such races at the same time is quite risky. We should investigate first, but there's not much time until

the war.

As I thought that, I wondered to myself who I should send.

Gi Gu is the ruler of the south. It's his land too, so I would be spitting on his face if I were to send another goblin to investigate.

Gi Gu Verbena would have to be the main goblin in charge, but he can't be alone, as he'll probably end up fighting the killer ants. I don't want to incur anymore losses if possible.

I'll have to send someone equal Gi Gu's standing, someone he can share his opinions with.

"Should I call Gi Do Buruga?"

The two shamans studying at the elven region were Gi Za Zakuend and Gi Do Buruga.

I could call those two and have them negotiate with the killer ants, but... they also had their own duties.

"Hmm... This one's a little worrying, but..."

I decided to send a different person. The killer ants did live in the desert, so...

As I made up my mind, I called over Fanfan and sent her along with Gi Gu to the south.



Outside the Forest of Darkness, past its western exit, was Shumea and her group in the capital of the Germion Kingdom. Currently, they were gathering information as adventurers.

Felbi knew little of the human world and Selena resented it, so the blind Pale had to teach them how to act.

They wore long robes that hid their elven features as they entered a bar.

"Hmm~ If it isn't the mellow fragrant of liquor..." Shumea said.

"It's just cheap liquor..." Pale pointed out.

"I drink when I'm happy, so it doesn't matter as long as I can get drunk.

Besides, if it's cheap, then I won't have to worry about the expenses," she replied, puffing out her abundant chest as she did.

Everyone else except for Shumea was clad in robes, so it wasn't possible to see their faces, but regardless, the way they walked spoke volumes of their strength. Because of that the experienced among the adventurers didn't bother them.

Of course, since Shumea was the only one without a robe, she was the one to order.

As various dishes and beer were served, Shumea and the elves ate as they eavesdropped on the conversations occurring in the other tables.

The sylphs have always had good hearing, so they were able to easily pick out what was being talked about.

When they had gathered enough information, they finally started to focus on the food before them.

"The humans sure know how to cook... You really can't look down on them," Felbi said as he struck his fork into the fried chicken.

"Felbi, in the human world, it's rude to talk with your mouth full," Pale flatly said, causing Selena to laugh.

"Ahh, alright, I'll be careful. I think there are a lot of ways to eat good food, though," Felbi said as he filled his mouth with hot food and then washed it off with a mug of beer before finally exhaling a large 'puha'.

"It's vulgar," Pale said.

"But this way is delicious. Come on, Selena, you try it," Felbi said.

As if he wasn't satisfied with ignoring teacher Pale, he even had to influence Selena.

Pale glared at Felbi as Selena happily imitated him.

"...Good grief," Pale sighed before taking a bite of her food.

She cut a small portion of her food and then gently placed it in her mouth. The way she ate was just like that of a young princess.

“What are you looking at? If you don’t eat, we’ll never finish all these,” Pale said when she noticed Shumea grinning at them.

When Shumea realized she’d stopped eating after being taken by the elves’ amusing interaction, she quickly cut a huge slice of bread, soaked it in soup, and ate it.

“Sure is great being free,” Shumea said.

“What do you mean?” Pale asked, not quite understanding what Shumea meant.

Shumea laughed cheerfully after eating her bread and drinking her soup. “Laughing, eating, talking... You know, normal stuff. Slaves are basically belongings, so they can’t do those things.”

Pale nodded.

As someone who has never been a slave, Pale couldn’t understand the value of Shumea’s ‘freedom’.

Shumea’s words gradually changed her perspective.

At the very least, there were no slaves under the Goblin King.

That was an irrefutable truth.

But wasn’t it simply because of the difference in the size of territory? The humans have been expanding and progressing in the past 400 years. As a result, a great disparity of wealth has been created between the rich and the poor.

If the Goblin King were to rule such a similarly large territory, wouldn’t the same problem befall him?

Perhaps the only reason the Goblin King did not have any slaves was because the territory he ruled was small. Moreover, he only ruled over goblins...

Was the human world you saw really that beautiful? Starvation, poverty, discrimination, innocents being blamed for crimes they did not commit, a stark difference between those with power and those without... Wasn’t that world also ruled by the same law of the jungle that haunts the savage forests?

The words of the king echoed within her mind.

Pale shook her head. He was wrong. Even if she wasn't particularly troubled in her upbringing, she wasn't blessed either. At the very least, she believed that.

After all, didn't she help Elks become a huge clan even while lacking money and people?

If you get your friends to help you, surely it would be possible to make life better. The human world has always worked like that.

The time she spent with them wouldn't possibly lose out to the Goblin King's rule.

"Pale?" Selena asked with concern when she noticed her go silent.

"Huh? Oh, it's nothing. I was just thinking," Pale said.

Seeing Pale eat again, Selena didn't ask anymore and continued eating herself.

It took 5 days to reach the elven village of Forni. On my back was flamberge and in my light armor were some throwing daggers. The disciple of Dumbre Dadee David was following me from behind.

"I-It's around here," he said in a fearful voice.

If you're wondering why I'm here, that's because a letter from David came.

—I would like to make use of your promise.

That was the only thing Fei read, and I immediately left the Fortress of the Abyss to the knight class, Gi Ga Rax, and set off for Forni.

"Are you really going when you're so busy?" Fei asked.

"Time is a finite resource, which is exactly why I must fulfill the promises I have made. That is what you call fidelity," I said.

All living things will eventually die. If I don't fulfill the promises I've made when I can, I might lose the opportunity to do so altogether.

"...Are you sure it's not because the throne is uncomfortable?" Fei asked.

"You jest," I retorted.

Though it's true it's not an easy job.

"I suppose once in a while should be fine," Fei said.

With those parting words, I took flamberge and headed for Forni.

"Wow, you really came," David said in surprise, laughing as he did. "My request is about my disciple."

Beside David was a young timid koro dwarf. He had a beard as well, but it was still thin compared to David's.

"He's skilled, but he's too cowardly. I'd like for you to accompany him," David said.

"My promise was—" I tried to explain, but he interjected.

"To swing your sword once for me, right? I would like you to use that sword of yours to protect my disciple," David said.

Well, I suppose it's fine.

"What is your disciple looking for?" I asked.

"Hey, kid! You tell him!" David implored his disciple.

The timid koro dwarf hit David on the back as he fearfully spoke. "I-I'm going to look for the shiny black stone known as Vasheyn and a wind spirit stone," he said.

Wouldn't you normally use black iron to forge a sword?

When David saw me puzzled at the unfamiliar name he laughed.

"Vasheyn is a fragile ore that normally can't be used, but this kid here wants to try no matter what, so I told him to get it himself," David explained.

He must trust him a great deal. David is plenty stubborn when it comes to smithing, so the fact that he's willing to let him try speaks volumes of his ability... It would be a pity to lose a talent like him.

"Very well. I shall fulfill my promise," I said.

"Thanks, Goblin King," David folded his arms and laughed with satisfaction.

We walked for 5 days from Forni toward the north. It's good to move without

an escort from time to time. It lets me hone my dulling senses.

I smiled as a horn fox appeared before me. It wasn't very big, but it was able to control fire. It's a kind of monster I've never met before.

As it cried a high-pitched voice, a flame was lit at the end of its lone horn. That flame condensed into a bullet, which then shot forth toward me.

It took 4 seconds all-in-all for it to load and shoot.

I lifted the screaming koro dwarf with one hand and jumped out of the way of the bullet.

As I watched the fire bullet shoot past me by my side, I thought of how troublesome it would be to deal with a skulk of horn foxes.

There's only one right now, so it's not too troublesome, but a skulk would really give me a run for my money.

I threw David's disciple into the bushes, then I bolted off with ether in my legs for the horn fox. In the blink of an eye, flames clad flamberge, and blood spurted in the air.

"Hmm..." I muttered as I pondered to myself.

"U-Umm... Goblin King, your majesty?" David's disciple called out to me.

I wonder if Gi Gi could make use of these guys.

"I found it!" David's disciple pointed to a rocky mountain beyond the trees.

So that's where we're going.

It's still morning, but the earlier we finish this, the better.

"Let's go then," I said.

I took my spoils with me and headed for the rocky mountain with David's disciple.



I noted a big scar on a tree as I noticed a flayed tree bark.

There was probably a large monster in the area, but we still continued our way.

The area surrounding the rocky mountain was as quiet as could be.

When we approached the base of the rocky mountain, a hole leading underground came to view.

“I-It’s here!” David’s disciple said as he – in a rare moment – showed some foolhardy courage and attempted to run off.

Of course, I grabbed him by the shoulders to stop him.

He looked at me not understanding, but I had already reached for my blade.

It seems doing nothing but paperwork everyday really did take a toll on me.

The thick aura of blood lust coming out from the hole made me inadvertently grip my sword tight.

I can’t believe I failed to notice such a powerful monster despite being this close!

“GURUUuuUuUUuuU...” As I bellowed out a howl, the monster showed himself.

It was a bear two times taller than my own height.

“A fire-speckled big bear! A red bear!” David’s disciple exclaimed in a daze.

“Get away!” I told him.

I could feel the pressure bearing down on me just standing in front of it.

The red fur of the bear shone in the light like a hard stretch of armor, and those claws on its paws looked so sharp they seemed like they could easily break my neck given the opportunity.

I looked down on monsters because I always believed I couldn’t lose to them, but it seems I might’ve been too arrogant.

That tree awhile ago was probably meant to show that this was its territory.

The reason it’s so quiet around here is also because of this monster.

“GAaRUAAAAaA!”

Standing on its hind-legs, the red bear let out a powerful howl, one strong enough to make me quiver.

In fact, even the very air shook as its howl resounded throughout the whole forest.

That howl woke me up.

I checked to see if my legs were still firmly planted on the ground.

I haven't gotten weaker physically, but it seems the hate within has grown weaker.

I must challenge this powerful enemy.

That is all that matters now.

Right now, not even my throne can make me turn around.

Heat literally left through my lips as it turned into a white cloud that flowed behind me.

In this moment, just like when I fought the orcs, just like when I fought the giant spider, just like when I fought the gray wolf, my instincts as a warrior awoke.

“GURUuUUuuUaAAa!!”

I bellowed out my own howl in response to the red bear's pressure, invoking Defiant Soul and World-Devouring Howl in the same breath.

—Mental pressure has been alleviated (HIGH)

—Defensive strength and offensive strength are increased when fighting a monster of a higher class.

Using Defiant Soul, I turned myself from a king to a mere warrior. In my hands, ether flowed into flamberge.

“Turn me into a blade!! (Enchant)”

The black flames I stole from Verid wrapped themselves around flamberge.

David forged it from alloy, so the flames were able to penetrate it smoothly, and the resulting sharpness was like the raging flames themselves.

“GARUuAAa!”

The red bear lifted up its burly arms and swung them.

I slashed with flamberge in response.

That might've been a foolish decision. After all, if I could, it would've been better to dodge.

A wave of paralysis rushed through my arms as my blade met with the red bear's claws.

—Those claws are too dangerous!

Flamberge failed to penetrate it despite being enchanted. What power!

I rooted myself to the ground as hard as I could as I sought to endure the red bear's strength.

I even invoked the Soul of the Berserk King to increase my strength at the cost of my sanity.

—Rejoice, my soul! Before us is a battle! A battle that is pure combat! There is no need to think. Not the future, not the past, not anything! Right now, in this moment, all that matters is this duel between two monsters!

“GURUUuUuAAAaGAAA!”

—The numbness of my arms left, and a power greater than I've ever felt bore into my sword and the land on which I stood.

—K-Kil, kill, kill the enemy!

My sword clashed with the red bear's claws once more.

“GAaAA!”

I lost out in power, but I neither felt fearful nor saddened. Instead, joy filled my cheeks as a smile appeared on my lips.

Was that because I was going insane, or was that simply because I could finally fight a worthy foe? I don't know, but either way, joy filled me!

“GURUuUuuAAA!”

I invoked Defiant Soul again to bring reason back to my sword, then I used Sword Mastery A-to bring it up a notch.

As my sword clashed with the red bear's claws, we simultaneously bellowed

out a howl.

“GAaaAAA!”

“GURUuUAAA!”

The red bear’s claws birthed great winds as it swung through the air, but my flamberge managed to repel them with a change in angle.

One hit, two hits, three, four...

The clash of raw power turned my thoughts into a lake of fire, the red bear the same. The only thing on our minds was to destroy each other.

Due to the twin-headed snake’s blessing, I was able to easily control my ether, allowing me to easily instantly concentrate it into various parts of my body at will.

“GAaAA AaA A!”

We were at a standstill, neither edging out over the other.

That seemed to enrage the red bear, as it bellowed out a howl louder than before and swung its claws.

—It got stronger!?

We have been equal for a while now, but suddenly, though only a little, the red bear was winning.

“Nu!?”

In this battle where one step wrong meant death, the sudden change in the enemy’s strength caused my sword to lag for a moment.

This is bad, I thought. And as soon as I did, the red bear swung its claws and sent me flying. It left a wound extending from my chest to my stomach that caused blood to spurt.

I dropped flamberge as I tumbled on the ground.

Just as I was planning on using ether to treat my wounds, the red bear bellowed out another howl. When I turned to it, it was about to ram me.

Helpless, I was sent flying once more.

As I crashed into a tree, my eyes grew hazy and blood puked out of my mouth.

Immediately after I took a throwing knife from my armor and threw it at the red bear.

“GAaAAA!?”

Though it only barely grazed it, it still managed to slow the red bear a little.

Using that opening, I took flamberge back.

My sides creaked.

I’ve taken plenty of damage, but there was no stopping now.

Using flamberge as a cane, I forced myself up.

—Don’t show weakness! If you show even a hint of it, everything will end!

I rebuked myself as I moved ether into my legs.

“My life is like a cloud of dust! (Accel)”

“GURUuuUUu...”

The red bear watched me closely as it stood back up again.

A contest of power began once more.

But try as I might, I still ended up losing out to the red bear.

I didn’t have time to stop my wounds from bleeding, so I had to gather my ether into various parts of my body, such as my legs, my back, my arms... If not for that, I would have lost a long time ago. My ether wouldn’t have held up if I just tried to heal myself normally.

Blood flowed from my chest down, but I never stopped swinging flamberge.

“GAaAa!”

“GURUuUaAA aA A!”

Gradually, my control over my ether started to let up, and I started making mistakes.

The flow of ether that ran from my ankle to my hips broke. When I realized

that, I jumped away from the red bear.

I immediately focused ether into my legs, but it broke off again.

I recalled that moment when I first messed up using ether directly on my own body, but instead of seeing an image of the worst case scenario flashing through my mind, I saw myself separated from my own body, looking down on it.

“GURUuuUu...”

—Why?

The red bear didn’t follow, and instead watched me.

What is it doing? Is it being cautious?

—What did I do just now?

I ignored the red bear for a moment and traced back to what I did.

I focused my ether onto my hips from my legs.... I moved the ether like water flowing...

—I moved it like water... is that it?

Until now, I’ve been gathering ether into whichever body part needed it. I would push ether into my legs, then into my hips to swing my sword, then my back, and then lastly, my arms.

But what if I moved ether like it was flowing, moving like water from one area to another?

“GARUaAAAaaAA!”

The red bear bellowed out a howl.

Let’s try it!

I didn’t have any other choice anyhow.

I jumped into the fray once more as I sought to control my ether again.

I caused ether to flow from my legs to my hips, then to my back, and then my arms. For the first time, I was consciously controlling it instead of relying on instinct.

Ether flowed like water as I swung flamberge, and suddenly, the battle I had been losing all this time, turned to my favor.

“GAaAa!?”

The red bear was shocked, but so was I.

Sparks flashed as flamberge clashed with the red bear’s claws.

Gradually, the red bear started to fight defensively.

Though shocked, I calmly accepted the situation and sought to finish the duel.

“GAaAA AaA A!”

—Of course, if I force him back, it’s only a given, he’ll come back fiercer!

But I slid through the flurry of swipes, to align my sword to take the kill.

“Turn me into a blade! (Enchant)”

At the same time, I invoked the King’s Dance at the Edge of Death and controlled ether in a flowing fashion, moving it from my legs to my hips, then to my back, my arms, and into flamberge! Then I invoked the Third Chant and unleashed my blade!

In the next instant, a fatal strike descended on the red bear, tearing it apart as flamberge tore through its armor-like fur from neck to chest.

The black flames raged as flamberge penetrated the red bear, leaving a scorching mark on the rocky mountain itself.

Looking down on the fallen red bear, I exhaled and began to heal myself.

—89 days until the war with the humans.



Level has risen.

72 => 92

‘Magic Manipulation’ has changed to ‘Flowing Magic Control’

Chapter 153: Killer Ant

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	92
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (The goddess)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

After defeating the red bear and retrieving the ore, we went back to David. Dragging back the red bear’s corpse all the way made the trip a difficult one.

“Well, I never. Who would’ve thought you’d be able to defeat that thing,” David said.

I furrowed my brows.

“Did you know that monster was there?” I asked.

If he knew, then he had basically sent me and his disciple to die. But why? I promised to swing my sword for him, so if he wanted me to defeat that thing, he could’ve just said so from the start.

There was no reason to ask me to escort his disciple.

“Well, I thought there might be a monster, so I asked you to escort him. At least with you around, I figured he’d come back alive,” David said.

So everything went just as he'd hoped for.

I suppose asking me to guard his disciple was more likely for me to accept than asking me to go kill some monster he wasn't didn't really know that well.

"From the looks of things, it seems you've run into some problems indeed, but because of that my disciple's also grown," David said.

David's disciple went to his workshop as soon as we came back, only giving a passing greeting to David.

"His eyes have changed. Thank you," David said.

"There's no need," I said.

It was a promise after all.

I didn't bother pursuing the issue of his request either.

Seven days later, a messenger came to me with a letter and a great sword.

On that sword's hilt was engraved the name: zweihander, the black-flame speckled great sword.

The sword was black and forged for strength. Its straight shape embodied its unbending will.

Only one sentence was written along with the sword. It read: Please use this when you lose your weapon.

I did lose my weapon during the battle with the red bear, didn't I?

"Kurt Bild Dash... That's the name of David's disciple."

My heart became lighter at the thought of a new budding talent.

Gi Gu Verbena is fighting a hard battle!

When I got that report, I couldn't help but doubt my ears for a moment. The chief of the tarpidae, Fanfan, accompanied Gi Gu to visit the killer ants in an attempt to pull them in as allies, but instead of gifts, what visited us next was a report of a difficult war.

Did something unexpected happen? Perhaps there were more of them than expected?

Unfortunately, as much as I wanted more information, the killer ants were too far from the fortress.

...In any case, this is a good opportunity.

As I thought that, I had the Paradua messenger give my orders.

“A war has begun in the south! Have Gi Gi Orudo gather his beasts! Then tell Gi Jii Yubu that the time to use his soldiers has come!”

But that wasn't all...

“Gi Ji Arsil shall lead the goblins under his banner to make way for the main force! And Gi Ga Rax! Have him gather his forces as well!”

It is best to have a rehearsal before the real thing, after all. What better opportunity is there to test our mettle in than in live combat? Moreover, the goblins gathered under me are too different and have never had the chance of working together.

Since the killer ants are numerous, I will have them help us in this combat exercise.

I gathered the four nobles and a knight goblin before me.

“Gi Ba, Gi Ii, Gi Uu, you will be following Gi Jii Yubu!”

The fierce arm, Gi Ba, the explorer, Gi Ii, the water mage, Gi Uu. They were all of the rare class but they were all different from each other.

These are the goblins Gi Jii trained. I'm looking forward to seeing how they've grown.

The goblins under him trained with three-man cells, then they moved on to kentors, and then regions.

Rares usually led the kentors, while the nobles led the regions. The goblins have been training under such a system for a while now, but we've never had the opportunity to test it. At long last, that opportunity has come.

I had Gi Ji Arsil lead his intelligence division to work as a scout and make a

path for the main force. The main force should travel a path as safe as possible.

“Shall we call the Gaidga and the Paradua as well?” Gi Ji Asked.

“Tell them to send what they can in the next two days!” I said.

“As you command!” Gi Ji replied.

After sending Gi Ji on his way, I called to those left behind.

“Fei, can I leave the fortress to you?” I asked.

“For some reason, it feels like I’ve always been getting the short end of the stick since leaving Forni,” Fei complained.

“Don’t grumble.” I wryly smiled and lightly hit him on the shoulders.

“Yes, yes, I understand. Go! Leave me be! Go have your fun,” Fei said.

I turned to Yellow. “As for the rest, Yellow, you handle it along with the old goblin.”

“As you will, Your Majesty,” he said.

We can make our move now precisely because the east, west, and north haven’t made their move.

Once the war with the humans begins, we will have to put all of our efforts there.

But in order to have that war, first, we must secure our territory and its surrounding territories.

I need to think about the demihumans too, but for now, I’ll have to prioritize the goblins.

It’s too difficult to tackle two issues at the same time, especially when you’re fighting a battle you can’t lose. It’s a pity I’m not that talented at war.

Even if I can lead my subordinates, being at the front makes it difficult to actually order them.

I’ll just have to train them well.

We spent a day preparing at the Fortress of the Abyss, then we made our way south.

The goblin horde numbered 400 goblins strong.



Thanks to Gi Ji Arsil and his goblins leading the way, we arrived at the Gaidga village to the south after a day. We took in the Paradua and Gaidga forces, and then headed further down south.

When we arrived at the southern region, Gi Ji came back after scouting to inform us that Gi Gu was fighting even further south. It seems he was fighting at the very borders of the forest and the desert, where the anthill of the killer ants were.

I thought they were being pushed back in the battle, but it seems, that wasn't the case.

"They're in their territory?" I asked.

"I know it's hard to understand, but..."

Gi Ji's report was a bit vague, but if the killer ants really had a way to fight enemies while dragging them into their own turf, I will really have to find a way to negotiate with them. That's exactly why I sent Gi Gu and Fanfan though.

Clearly, talks have failed.

It would be best to keep this war short. We'll ensure there's enough food first, then we'll quickly decide to battle. If the war goes for too long, it might negatively influence our coming war with the humans.

After ordering my subordinates to gather food and for Gi Gi to position his beasts at the furthest area of our formation, I went to rest.

The reason I had the beasts placed furthest away from us was to ensure that we wouldn't be attacked while we were asleep. They had noses superior even to ours, so they would surely be able to tell when an enemy is coming.

As the goblins gathered food and Gi Ji Arsil gathered intelligence, I gradually understood the current state of the war.

There was indeed an anthill at the borders of the forest and the desert, but it was at least a day's distance into the desert. Honestly, it's a bit hard to say that's still close to the forest when by that time you can't see anything but

sand.

Gi Gu's southern goblins specialized in forest warfare. They managed to defeat the killer ants before because they fought in the forest, but when they tried to destroy the anthill this time around, they had to walk under the sweltering heat of the desert sun, only to be met by a surprise attack from the killer ants. It seems that was the reason behind their difficulties.

I made full use of Gi Ji's gathered intel to pinpoint the enemy's location and ascertain our distance.

"Gi Jii Yubu shall lead the vanguard," I said.

"As my lord commands," Gi Jii Yubu said, kneeling.

The reason I had him lead the vanguard was because this battle was essentially to help Gi Gu. Gi Gi and his horde of beasts or Gaidga and their overly ferocious goblins would surely have a hard time cooperating with Gi Gu and his southern goblins.

As for Gi Ga Rax and his horde of 'injured goblins' and Paradua with their beast riders, their power probably wouldn't be able to match the killer ants' brute strength of sheer numbers.

Of course, the 'injured goblins' and the Paradua have their own specialties such as tenacity and flexibility, but either way, I'm not comfortable having them take the main stage this time.

Because of that I decided to put Gi Jii's new soldiers to use.

"Riders of Paradua, you shall ride along Gi Jii's flanks," I said.

"We raise our spears for the king!" The young chieftain, Hal, said as he raised his spear toward the heavens.

"Gi Gi, Rashka, and Gi Ga, you are to be on standby. Wait for my orders," I said.

Rashka wasn't all that happy with waiting, but he complied nevertheless.

"Don't make that face," I said to Rashka. "Your role is an important one. It's essentially, the cleanup crew. You can expect much."

“If you say so,” Rashka said, nodding with his arms folded.

Now then, I think it’s about time we drew the curtains.



Gi Gu clicked his tongue and rolled his eyes as he watched colonies of killer ants come out from everywhere in the desert.

“Lord Fanfan, are you not done yet!?” Gi Gu demanded.

“Lord Gi Gu, don’t you know one shouldn’t hurry a lady? Fanfan is already rushing as she is,” Fanfan said.

They’ve been on the receiving end of one surprise attack after another, and apparently, the reason for that was the underground tunnels of the killer ants.

From a glance, the place looked no different from any other place aside from the crag-like opening, but killer ants suddenly came crawling out of the sand.

With a battlefield like that, it was only natural that Gi Gu would have a hard time.

Presently, Fanfan was looking for when the ants would come out of these hidden tunnels.

Gi Gu wanted to avoid dealing with the endless swarms of killer ants unprepared, so he had to rely on Fanfan to figure when and where they would be coming from.

Being able to figure out the movements in the earth was one the greatest skill of the tarpidae, which was known as the ‘hardest claw’.

“They’re coming. Five ants from the right and back. They’re 20 steps away to the right and 10 steps away from the back.”

10 seconds later, just as she predicted, killer ants came out of the ground, but unfortunately for them, axes and spears were waiting to greet them.

Unfortunately, Fanfan was only one person. Because of that Gi Gu and his goblins have been progressing very slowly.

It was still much better than fighting blind though.

“This is bad, a huge swarm is approaching,” Fanfan said.

As soon as Gi Gu heard that, he clicked his tongue and called out to his men.

“Brace yourselves! They’re going to come from all directions!” Gi Gu said.

The three sibling goblins Gi Gu trained raised their voices hastily.

“Brace yourselves! Brace yourselves!” Gu Long said.

“They’re coming from below! From below!” Gu Big said.

“Draw your weapons!” Gu Tough said.

“50 killer ants from the back and the left,” Fanfan said.

Gi Gu clicked his tongue. “Have we been lured!?”

The duke class, Gi Gu Verbena, calculated in his mind.

At this rate, the warriors the king had given him will all be crushed.

The fatigue they’ve been incurring since leaving the forest was by no means small.

With nothing to block the sunlight, the day itself sapped them of their strength and the scorching heat of the sand made it feel like they were walking on hot coals. Even finding something to drink wasn’t easy around these parts.

At this rate, they would surely be annihilated.

The southern desert was rich, but they didn’t have an endless supply of warriors. It took time to train a warrior.

But the king gave him a command. The ants were to either obey or be wiped out.

He wasn’t sure how he would report to the king that he wasn’t able to accomplish either, but with no other choice left, he resolved himself and drew his long sword.

“Since they’ve gone through all the effort of going out, we’ll send their heads as a present to his highness!” Gi Gu stomped on the ground and encouraged his subordinates.

“Oh, there’s another 400 coming from behind,” Fanfan suddenly added.

“What!?” Gi Gu spat. “400... Burn it all!”

If it was impossible to win, he would have no choice but to retreat.

Unfortunately, 400 ants were blocking his path of retreat.

“Go! We’ll break through the back!” Gi Gu commanded.

At the very least, he would lead his horde and cut open a path of retreat.

“Ah, but...” Fanfan feigned trying to argue.

She didn’t lie. After all, there were indeed 400.

As the clouds of sand cleared up, a great horde suddenly came to view, but there was something off. For one, killer ants didn’t need to clear the clouds of sand.

The goblins squinted their eyes in an attempt to see despite the blinding light of the sun. Gradually, the figures of that great horde came to view.

“That’s!” Gi Gu exclaimed.

“Reinforcements,” Fanfan coolly said as if she’d known all along.

Gi Gu turned to Fanfan with reproachful eyes.

“You should’ve said so from the start!” He rebuked.

“Hey, all I said was the number. Never said they were enemies. Besides, Fanfan isn’t very good at things walking on the ground,” she said.

“Arghhh!” Gi Gu clicked his tongue for the umpteenth time, then he turned to the one leading their reinforcements.

It was a goblin donned in an armor and wielded a spear. It was most likely Gi Jii.

“Gi Jii Yubu and his soldiers have come! Stand and fight goblins! We can’t lose face here!” Gi Gu said with a howl as he led the southern goblins to fight the swarm of killer ants.

Having been caught in the middle of a pincer attack, the killer ants from behind were extinguished in the blink of an eye.

Gi Jii and Gi Gu were glad to see each other safe.

“Your safety above all else, Lord Gi Gu,” Gi Jii said.

“Sorry, and thank you. Still... you sure took your sweet time coming,” Gi Gu said.

It wasn't only Gi Jii's army that came, the Paradua had also come. They stood out from the goblins because of their rider beasts, so any goblin could instantly tell whether one was from Paradua or not.

“His liege has commanded that we extinguish the killer ants of the south,” Gi Jii said.

“What!?” Gi Gu exclaimed.

“Lord Gi Ji Arsil reported of the difficulties of your battle, and so in his highness' fear of losing one of his most valued men, he gave that command,” Gi Jii explained.

“How shameful... I must thank the king. Can you lead me to him,” Gi Gu asked.

Gi Jii nodded. “The king has willed that you retreat for the time being. Will that be acceptable?”

“With the way things are, it can't be helped,” Gi GU said.

Though the goblins trampled over their enemies, the desert still took a lot out of them. It was best to let the southern goblins rest first, then join the fray when they were back to health. Hence, Gi Gu voiced no complaints to the king's will.

“Fanfan will go too,” Fanfan said.

“It's my fault, it's fine if I go alone,” Gi Gu said to Fanfan, who had apparently gotten behind him without noticing.

“I'm sick of the heat,” Fanfan complained. “I want to rest in the cool forest.”

“...Do what you want,” Gi Gu said, not bothering to stop Fanfan, who neither bothered to hide her true intentions.

After that the goblins called the tarpidae for reinforcements and the battle greatly swung to their favor.

The goblin king used 'baits' to lure out the enemy and quickly crushed them with the goblins' overwhelming number.



Thanks to Fanfan's people we were able to make our way to the killer ants' anthill. From a distance, it looked no more than any other rock, but it was actually a giant hole. It was what you would call a dungeon.

The passage was narrow, so it would not be possible to send a large army through. Because of that we decided to send only the strong.

Rashka, of course had to go, being the most eager of the goblins. Gi Gu Verbena would also be going, as he wanted to clear his name of his recently incurred shame. Gi Ji Arsil would be going to serve as scout. Gi Ga Rax, as well, as he insisted that he had to be the one to guard me. And lastly, Fanfan and me, the former which I forcefully dragged. Altogether, there were about 50 of us who entered the anthill.

I left Gi Jii Yubu and Hal to stand watch outside. With the tarpidae working alongside them, they could continuously bait the enemy and scatter their forces.

The interiors of the anthill was a lot bigger than expected. It was also plenty bright.

The passage was made big probably to make it easy to transport their captured prey. Light would also shoot inside from above, keeping the place well lit.

Killer ants naturally attacked us along the way, but Rashka made short work of them.

I hope he doesn't become too eager and end up destroying the anthill, though...

As we descended down the anthill, their numbers grew, some of which were warriors of their own kind. Army ants, which possessed powerful shells and jaws. Still, they were mercilessly beaten by Rashka.

Gi Gu Verbena and the elite of his southern goblins formed three-man cells as they fought alongside Rashka.

After descending 10 levels, we finally succeeded in capturing the ant queen.

Rashka was about to crush her, but Fanfan stopped him.

The queen's guards were killed and she herself was being pinned down, but Fanfan talked to her.

As far as I was concerned, her groans were nothing more than 'groans' indeed, but apparently, Fanfan could understand those groans.

Fanfan started making strange cries to converse with the queen. After a while, she called me over.

"Your Majesty, the ants are willing to obey as long you give them food. Also, they will obey even more if you treat Fanfan better," Fanfan said.

That last part was obviously a lie, but she deserved to be rewarded, so I let it pass. Especially, since I didn't really want to destroy them but have their cooperation instead.

"I see... So, Fanfan, who wants to be treated better, what is that you want?" I asked.

"Eh, seriously? Wow, Your Majesty, you're so kind! Then please get Yushika's bag—" she said.

"Rejected," I curtly said.

"Not fair! Didn't you say you'd treat me better? Fanfan thinks it's no good to lie," Fanfan said.

But that doesn't have anything to do with bettering your treatment, that's just poking fun at people.

"Well, fine. If that's no good, then Fanfan would like for the elves to prioritize sending paper to her," Fanfan said.

"Oh? That's fine with me, but what are you using them for?" I asked.

"I've been writing a book lately. Fanfan is good at both literature and drawing," she said.

"Very well then. I shall talk to Fei about it," I said.

"Yay! Thank you, Your Majesty!" She said.

After that Fanfan talked with the queen for a long time. I left the queen to

her, and went back up to prepare.

The leadership of the noble classes and above is still lacking.

The enemy this time was weak, so were able to deal with them without issue, but this won't do... I'll have to talk to Gi Jii and the others about this.

—57 days until the war with the humans.



Rashka's level has risen.

76 => 81

Gi Gu Verbena's level has risen.

1 => 20

Chapter 154: Scarabs

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	92
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (The goddess)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

“You wish to be acquainted with humans?”

In a corner of the great elven village, Gastair, where the branches up above had intentionally been cleared out to let the light of the sun pass, were two goblins talking over a table made of wood. It was the kind of place that the Goblin King would refer to as a park.

Studying goblins and demihumans from various villages could frequently be seen here.

Of the goblins that were evidently greatly influential were two goblins of the shaman class. Their ability to control the winds and their appearance that set them apart from other goblins have already been accepted by the elves.

“Yes, teacher. I have been studying history lately, but the more I read, the more incomprehensible humans become. They are strong yet sly, powerful yet fragile... Exactly which of these aspects is their true nature?” Gi Do asked.

The king’s most faithful goblin, Gi Za Zakuend, closed one eye and took a deep

breath. “Is that book something you borrowed from that elven princess too? You shouldn’t get involved with her too much. It’ll only hurt more later.”

“I don’t think I follow.” Gi Do Buruga said; he was another shaman goblin as well as a student of Gi Za Zakuend.

“Both aspects are true. You recall the king’s treasure, yes?” Gi Za said, moving on with the main subject.

What the goblins referred to as the king’s treasure was the human maiden the king had with him back when they yet knew of the human threat. Her name was Reshia Fel Zeal, a woman and a saint blessed with the power to heal wounds.

“That inexhaustible source of life, the power to recover one’s wounds instantly. With that by our side, it was like we could be brought back even from the dead. But despite possessing such great power, even a normal goblin could kill her. You could say that humans are imbalanced creatures,” Gi Za said.

As Gi Do nodded, an elf called out to them.

“Mind if I join?” The voice said.

When the goblins turned, what greeted them was a cute elven girl. She had inherited the looks of her parents and was blessed with a noble face. She also had an unyielding spirit which showed through her slightly lifted gaze. She had light clothes on as if she were about to go outside, but what she had on hand was not a weapon but a thick book.

“Lord Shunaria!” Gi Do happily welcomed her.

Contrast to Gi Do’s glee, however, Gi Za had a look on his face as if someone unwanted had come.

“It’s fine. We were just wrapping up. Gi Do, don’t cause trouble for the young princess,” Gi Za said.

“Yes, teacher,” Gi Do said.

Gi Za turned heel and went back to his lab, leaving the couple to happily chat among themselves.

Gi Za was researching about the blood of demihumans.

He knew that there was a power hidden within their blood from the demihuman war and the old documents of the elves, but he did not know how and what kind of power it exhibited.

The young centaur hero, Gurfia, ate the flesh of his brethren and turned himself into a fire demon. The elves used to have a way to concoct stimulants from demihuman blood, but unfortunately, it was lost to the ravages of time.

It goes without saying that for a goblin who has only learned how to read half a year ago, gathering all the data in the library to research even a single topic was nigh impossible.

As a result, Gi Za turned to experiments. Under the pretense that he needed blood to examine them, he was able to regularly procure some demihuman blood from the once enslaved demihumans.

In exchange, he would hunt monsters for them or give them the flowers Kuzan arranged. The demihumans and the elves thought him odd, but that didn't stop him from continuing his research.

This day was no different. Gi Za cooped himself in his lab and analyzed the demihuman blood. He did not stop even when someone knocked on the door.

"Just go in. I'm busy right now," Gi Za said.

"Ho ho, excuse me for intruding," Gi Za's unexpected visitor said.

As it turns out, it was none other than the old elf, Falun. He was the director of the elven school and though already retired from chief work, he was a person of great influence. He observed Gi Za's research with rapt attention.

"I'm busy right now. What do you need?" Gi Za asked.

"I just wanted to know how your research has been progressing," Falun said with a smile.

Gi Za wryly smiled. "It hasn't. Leave."

"Hmm... As I thought. Still, I can't help but be curious, goblin. What is that has you so intrigued about the demihuman blood? What is it that you seek?" Falun asked.

"Power, of course." Gi Za replied.

Falun stroke his white beard, puzzled. "Aren't you goblins strong enough? You have already conquered the eastern forest, no?"

Silence filled the room for a moment, then Gi Za spoke.

"Do you know what our king seeks?" He asked.

"To defeat humanity?" Falun asked, though only to confirm what he believed could only be the correct answer.

"No, that's not it. Our king seeks to stretch out his hand and fill it with every corner of the world. In other words, world domination," Gi Za said.

Impossible, Falun thought, but when he noted the glint in Gi Za's eyes, he swallowed his breath.

"I will stand beside the king. If he is to conquer the world, then I will be the sword that stands by his side!" Gi Za declared with such power that he ended up breaking the glass cup in his hand.

"—I want power! I want more power!" Gi Za said.

His voice was filled with such passion it seemed to burn a hue like that of rage. Falun had always taken him to be a calm one, but who would've thought that he actually hid such fervor within?

"So, that is why you've turned to demihuman blood?" Falun said.

"Yes. That demihuman they referred to as a man-eating tiger. Even if it's only for a moment, if we could gain a power like that, we would surely be able to bolster our forces. That's why—" Gi Za said.

"Is the world something you can get with power alone, Gi Za Zakuend?" Falun asked.

"What?" Gi Za asked.

"Do you really believe you will be able to reach the ends of the world with power alone?" Falun asked.

Gi Za fell silent at Falun's question, while Falun's eyes became nostalgic for some reason.

"What is needed then? What else is needed to defeat one's foes?" Gi Za

asked.

“If the enemies are strong, weaken them. If they are unified, divide them. If the enemies try to walk, trip them. That is what we refer to as strategy,” Falun said.

“Strategy...” Gi Za muttered.

“People can’t gel along forever. Use that,” Falun advised, then he handed a book to Gi Za.

“I spent my whole life writing it. It is a book on strategies. At least, give it a glance.”

After that Falun left Gi Za to himself.

“I will stand beside the king, huh,” Falun said to himself, seemingly in reminiscence of something



After the killer ants, we proceeded to attack the scarabs. They were much more tenacious than the goblins, but they were few in number and were nocturnal. They were no threat to the goblins.

Unfortunately, much friction has come between our races, as their kind would sometimes attack the goblins who went out to hunt. Since we have already mobilized our troops to deal with the killer ants, I figured we might as well deal with them.

“How far are the scarabs from here?” I asked.

After occupying the anthill, we began gathering information through the ant queen and Gi Gu. As it turns out, their home was a three days’ walk from the anthill. I ordered Gi Gu to scout ahead, while I led the goblins.

“We should send a messenger first. If they are willing to cooperate, we can talk, if not, then we’ll turn to force,” I said.

I asked for a volunteer to act as messenger, and the young chief of Paradua, Hal, and Gi Gu Verbena of the wolf pack stepped out.

“A messenger’s duty is perilous. I do not mean to imply you are slow, Lord Gi

Gu, but I believe that someone who specializes in mobility such as our tribe of Paradua would be better suited to this job. Please pick me, Your Majesty,” Hal said.

“No, it was I who was dispatched first, I should go. This time for sure I will carry out my mission without fail. Please let me wipe away the shame I’ve incurred, Your Majesty!” Gi Gu said.

There was reason behind their words, and either one would actually work, but then I remembered that this area was under Gi Gu’s territory.

“Hal, I know and praise your faithfulness, but you’ll have to take a step back on this one. Gi Gu, I leave it to you,” I said.

“As you command, Your Majesty!” Gi Gu said.

Gi Gu certainly suffered in the hands of the killer ants, but he did not actually fail his mission. He had undertaken an investigation and negotiation job, so I have to give him an even bigger one to show that my trust in him has not faltered.

It would be troubling if he started to doubt himself after one mistake.

There’s a limit to how much I can do by myself. I will need excellent goblins who can manage others if I am to build my kingdom.

Everything is for the sake of defeating the humans.



In the deep of the night, where even the cries of the insects were silenced, where the night god covered the land and the goddess of darkness spread her wings, concealing the light of the twin goddess moons, Gi Gu negotiated with the chief of the scarabs.

He took with him the three Gu brothers. It was an odd feeling for one such as he who was accustomed to leading a great horde, but that in and of itself was a testament to how much importance he placed on this mission.

The chief of the scarabs had – as his name implied – a red carapace that could easily be mistaken for full-body armor. On the back of his carapace were transparent feathers and on his head was a lone horn. There was a pair of

antennas that dangled down from his mouth, which he used to search for prey. His limbs were slender, but only because they were compressed inside his carapace, they were by no means weak.

On his hand, he wielded a white spear made out of the bone of some sort of beast.

Gi Gu could not read the scarab chief's emotions from his compound eyes.

The scarab chief spoke as his antennas dangled about. "The revered... chief of the bugmen... Kunshi!"

His voice was not by any means easy to understand.

"Thank you for taking the time to meet me," Gi Gu said emotionlessly.

"Bugmen... have no time... State your... business," Kunshi said.

"Very well then, I shall get straight to the point. If you are willing to cooperate with our king, we can talk, if not..."

Gi Gu reached for his sword. If this bugman was not willing to comply, he would cut him down this very instant.

Kunshi's antennas started swaying quickly as if in a panic.

"Kunshi... Likes peace... No fight..." Kunshi said.

"Then you would prefer peace?" Gi Gu asked.

When he saw Kunshi nod, Gi Gu nodded in satisfaction and set a date to meet.

After that Kunshi visited the king at the appointed time and formed an alliance with the king. Unfortunately, the scarabs weren't exactly unified, so Gi Gu was left with the misfortune of having to figure out what to do with them.

—47 days until the war with the humans.

Intermission: Thousand Li to the North, Embrace the Dawn I

Status

Name	Gi Go Amatsuki
Race	Goblin
Level	2
Class	Duke; Wandering Swordsman
Possessed Skills	Sword Mastery A-; Purple Flash; Forsake; Sense; A Master Swordsman's Proof; Silent Nature; Veteran
Divine Protection	Sword God
Attributes	None
Abnormal Status	Sworn to Spare; Sword God's Control

The yugushiva’s dance-like attack left Gi Go on the defensive. He wanted to attack, but the snow was just too great of an enemy. The snow reached up his knees, and every time he tried to step in, the snow would sap as much force as he pushed in, dulling his movements.

It was difficult to attack.

“Mr. Gi Go!”

As far as Yoshu was concerned, nothing had changed. Even if there was snow and even if the enemy fought remarkably well like dancing, all he had to do was to put out his shield as usual.

“Don’t... interfere!” Gi Go said.

Despite being pushed back, Gi Go did not look anxious, if anything, he looked happy. The yugushiva jumped from the snow as the wind fluttered its white overcoat, stirring up the snow before rushing for Gi Go.

The yugushiva was like a carnivorous bird fluttering in the vast sky as it looked for an opening and bolted for it.

The yugushiva’s curved sword that was as big as it cut through the clouds of snow as it struck out toward Gi Go.

In response, Gi Go swept away the snow by his feet.

Gi Go could not match the enemy in speed, so he decided to wait for the

enemy and exchange blows.

The light of the fire god's body reflected off his curved sword.

"Come!" Gi Go said.

Gi Go lowered his hips and positioned his sword horizontally as he took on a stance that hid his curved sword from the enemy.

A powerful aura emanated from Gi Go. It was so powerful that Yoshu couldn't help but gulp as he watched.

If this were a normal monster fighting him, it would surely run from his terrifying aura.

But the yugushiva Gi Go was facing did not falter in the slightest. In fact, the yugushiva gave a battle cry as it ran even faster.

"RUuoAAa!!"

When the yugushiva was about 10 steps away, it swung his curved sword again, concealing both its and Gi Go's figures.

"Tch!?" Yoshu snapped his tongue.

He knew that the snow was the enemy's ally, so he quickly looked for Gi Go to run where he was.

Yoshu was reminded again of how foolish it was to fight this demon here. The snow was their home ground, and it was precisely because they were unparalleled on it that they came to be known as yugushiva, which literally meant snow demon.

"Naive. Too naive," Yoshu spat as he cursed his own naivety.

Before Yoshu could find Gi Go, however, the yugushiva jumped out of the snow, then sounds of swords clashing filled the area.

Not long after, the yugushiva jumped back again, and Gi Go's figure appeared shortly after he brushed away the snow.

Fortunately, he was still safe. Yoshu heaved a sigh of relief.

"Mr. Gi Go! Let's withdraw! The odds are far too against us!"

They should run while they still could.

“Retreat? Yoshu, the very purpose of this trip is right before our eyes! How could I run!?”

Gi Go wanted to find a worthy adversary and suppress the sword god within, then he would stand before the king once more.

“But!” Yoshu wanted to say that the enemy was too strong, but Gi Go only shook his head, his gaze never leaving the enemy before him.

When Gi Go clashed with this enemy awhile ago, the enemy swung its sword three times. When Gi Go thought back on how he planned to exchange blows, he couldn’t help but deride himself. The enemy’s sword was far faster and far sharper than he could have ever imagined.

Because of that Gi Go could only defend against two of the three strikes, while the third managed to graze his arm, leaving behind a trail of blood.

“Speak no further! I have all that I’ve asked for! A strong enemy, a worthy foe!”

Gi Go did not spare a glance on the blood drizzling down his arm. He only grit his teeth as he exhaled a faint breath, focusing his mind on the sword god sleeping within.

Yoshu was at a loss.

The pressure Gi Go was emanating seemed even greater than before, but that might’ve only been his imagination. He wasn’t sure.

Regardless, he needed to make up his mind. Should he let Gi Go fight? Or should he forcefully stop him?

Gi Go was certainly fighting better today than ever, but despite that... When Yoshu looked to the yugushiva, he couldn’t help but feel anxious.

The yugushiva bolted off again.

It’s too dangerous!

The aura emanating from the yugushiva was abnormal. It felt sharp like a drawn sword. As a battle slave, Yoshu has clashed against countless enemies,

from humans to monsters, and yet never before has he met someone who possessed an aura as terrifying as this.

“If I don’t make a decision soon, I won’t be able to anymore,” Yoshu said to himself.

In the worst case, he would have to stop Gi Go against his will. Yoshu braced himself to throw the throwing dagger hidden behind his shield.

He can’t let him die here. He couldn’t die here either. Both he and Gi Go had a place they had to return to.

Yoshu apologized to Gi Go in his heart as he eyed the Yugushiva.

The yugushiva was running around Gi Go, but just a little, he glanced at Yoshu. It was just for a moment, but the yugushiva was clearly aware of Yoshu as he ran in zigzag toward Gi Go.

When Yoshu saw that, he clicked his tongue and approached him.

The agile yugushiva moved around as if to avert Yoshu’s aim. It would not be easy to hit him.

Meanwhile, Gi Go seemed to have closed his eyes even as the yugushiva approached.

The atmosphere was tense, so tense that Yoshu forgot to breathe as he watched the enemy near Gi Go.

But then... the moment the yugushiva came into Gi Go’s range, like an oil spring lit, Gi Go erupted, bellowing out a powerful howl.

“GURUUuaAAAA!”

“RUuuaAAAli!”

The yugushiva bellowed back against Gi Go as he swung down his curved sword.

Sparks erupted as two curved swords and two spirits clashed. Gi Go’s curved sword that was hidden behind him pierced through the stirred up snow, parrying the yugushiva’s curved sword up above his head. At the same time, the yugushiva stepped into the snow and brought its deflected sword back down

onto Gi Go's head.

But Gi Go had already taken back his sword, allowing him to block the yugushiva's slash. The experience Gi Go had accumulated until now was responding to the standards of the sword god.

From defense Gi Go smoothly moved to offense. After having blocked the enemy's sword, the enemy had gotten much slower, allowing him to ignore it as he held his curved sword in a reverse grip and swung it at the enemy's neck. There should have been no room to escape to, but the enemy went beyond Gi Go's expectations.

The enemy quickly took back its sword with a sharpness and speed that excelled that of Gowen's, allowing it to deflect Gi Go's attack, then this time, it struck out its sword for Gi Go's neck.

The battle continued like this with both swordsmen dancing at the edge of death.

Gi Go and the yugushiva clashed swords over 20 times.

Until now Yoshu has never before seen anyone fight this long while standing point blank each other.

Consequently, because they were so close to each other, Yoshu couldn't find the opportunity to throw his dagger. He wanted to create an opening, but even that didn't seem possible.

When the dance finally ended, it was because the yugushiva jumped back.

Gi Go and the yugushiva had clashed swords at least 20 times, and though they were unable to land a fatal wound on each other, both parties were covered in small wounds.

Gi Go and the yugushiva gasped for breath, a cloud of white leaving their mouth as it faded behind them.

Yoshu was relieved to see Gi Go safe, and when he noted that the yugushiva was breathing heavily, he thought that the opportunity had finally come.

"Forgive me, Mr. Gi Go!"

As Yoshu uttered an apology, he threw away his shield and threw five daggers

at the yugushiva.

“Yoshu!” Gi Go reprimanded Yoshu, but he could not stop him.

When the yugushiva noticed that an attack was coming, it tried to run away, but unfortunately, the snow had grasped its legs, leaving it unable to run.

Sensing that the yugushiva was panicking, Yoshu threw 5 more daggers. The yugushiva was tired, he had to strike now! He thought.

The yugushiva wasn't so soft as to lose to a long-ranged attack, however. Though the yugushiva had lost its posture, it still managed to recover in time and jump away, sweeping away the incoming daggers with a swing of its sword.

The yugushiva jumped back to get away from Yoshu, but when it landed its body shook. The yugushiva seemed to be in some sort of pain, but that was all the more reason for Yoshu to strike.

The yugushiva used its curved sword as a cane to keep its body up, letting it swing its sword again to deflect the wave of daggers, but one dagger still managed to graze its legs, causing blood to spurt.

Now bleeding, the yugushiva's strength gradually drained.

After having to dodge five more daggers, the yugushiva's body shook as it relied on its sword as a cane. Its former strength was no longer there.

“You're too dangerous! You have to die!” Yoshu yelled as he threw one last set of daggers.

But just when he thought the enemy couldn't possibly dodge anymore, a sword swung, deflecting his thrown daggers.

The one who swung, however, was not the yugushiva, but Gi Go.

“Mr. Gi Go!? What are you—!?” Yoshu asked.

“Yoshu, that's enough!” Gi Go rebuked.

Gi Go could not deflect all of Yoshu's daggers while protecting the yugushiva, so he ended up getting hurt in the process.

“Nu...” Gi Go kept himself from groaning out in pain as he took out the daggers and threw them on the ground.

“That person is too dangerous!” Yoshu argued as he pushed away the snow and ran up to Gi Go.

But Gi Go didn’t say anything and just looked toward the yugushiva.

“...If I let a female die, I wouldn’t have any face left to show the king,” Gi Go said.

“...Huh?” Yoshu asked.

When he looked at the yugushiva lying on the ground, it turned out to be a young woman.

Gi Go carried the yugushiva to the cave he and Yoshu stayed at before, then he had Yoshu begrudgingly treat the yugushiva. When he thought to step out for a walk, he came back with a snow lizard.

Gi Go proposed to take care of supper in hopes of quelling Yoshu’s dissatisfaction.

“I tied her up well, so...” Yoshu said.

When Gi Go followed Yoshu’s gaze to the yugushiva, he noted that the yugushiva had herbs and bandages properly applied on her. Yoshu had even prepared a proper place for her to rest, including a blanket. As far as ‘tied up’ went, Yoshu only tied up her hands with a rope.

“You’re surprisingly kind,” Gi Go remarked.

Yoshu sneered back. “She’s unarmed and there’s two of us, so I figured she wasn’t much of a threat anymore.”

Yoshu filled a pot with water and placed it atop the fire, then he took the snow lizard from Gi Go’s hands and started preparing their supper.

One side of Gi Go’s face lifted up as he faintly smiled.

His gaze was turned to the curved sword the yugushiva woman had used. It was not something suited for the slender hands of a woman.

Gradually, the time of the fire god neared its end, and the hour of the night god came.

Whenever night came Yoshu would teach Gi Go how to sing. He would sing once to show Gi Go, then Gi Go would try to mimic it, and Yoshu would point out whenever he made a mistake, then they would start all over again.

The night went on, but tonight the twin goddess moons showed themselves, weakening the goddess darkness' influence. The red moons dyed the snow in its hue as silence filled the north. But in that deathly silence was a soft singing sound resounding from one cave.

"Do you still remember our home land? Oh small winds of the sky, take these feelings with you (kyanmaroodo rinbaa. Raabekastoria, vesjiinichukeruu)," Gi Go sang in a low-pitched voice, causing Yoshu to burst out laughing as he pointed out Gi Go's errors.

"Your pronunciation is a bit off. Listen... Do you still remember our home land? Oh winds of the great sky, take my feelings with you (kyanmaroruudo, riinbaaru. Haabekasutoria, vesjiinichiukeruu)," Yoshu said.

Gi Go nodded and tried again.

Gradually, the tune Gi Go sang became bearable enough to listen to. Yoshu nodded in satisfaction and smiled.

"Not bad. If you keep practicing, you might even become a minstrel one day," Yoshu said.

"When that time comes, I'll give your name whenever people asks me for my teacher," Gi Go said.

"Please don't. I wouldn't want to be stoned," Yoshu teased.

"I wonder what happened?" Gi Go said as he turned his gaze to the sleeping yugushiva and rubbed his chin. "I didn't think the proud yugushiva would be a female. I wanted to win because I thought I was facing a strong male."

"I don't suppose it's realistic to expect her to lead us to her village either. They don't seem very friendly, what with attacking us out of the blue like that," Yoshu said.

Yoshu sighed while Gi Go pondered.

Yoshu never really had much qualms about killing the yugushiva. As a battle

slave, gender never really mattered. Whether it was a woman or a man, they would kill them all the same. The thought wouldn't even cross them, in fact.

Unfortunately, Gi Go had already lost interest. Moreover, from the goblins' perspective, the females were weak creatures that they had to protect at all costs. Of course, there were exceptions such as Princess Narsa, but they didn't usually see them as someone to cross swords with.

—Maybe I should torture her after all to make her cough up some useful information.

Yoshu thought to himself as he watched the woman sleep, but then he noticed something unusual.

“Hmm?” Yoshu muttered.

When Yoshu was about to approach the woman, he noticed that her eyes were open wide.

“Rabaiyaru!? Gerunoia!” She cried in the northern language as she tried to sit up. When she realized that her hands were tied, a look of panic washed over her face. Immediately, she pushed aside the blanket and stood up, but a wave of dizziness hit her, forcing her back down onto her knees.

“It doesn't seem to be a cold... But it has to be some sort of illness,” Yoshu remarked as he coldly watched the woman cough.

Yoshu lifted up his shield and glanced at Gi Go, seemingly asking him if they should fight or not, but in response, Gi Go only frowned for a moment before standing up and carelessly walking to the woman.

“Wait, Mr. Gi Go! It's dangerous! She could bite!” Yoshu said.

“There's nothing to worry,” Gi Go said.

The woman forcefully stopped her coughing as she growled at Gi Go, who was looking down at her.

It didn't seem apparent back when they were fighting, but now that they were here in the cave, Gi Go could clearly be seen to be at least two heads bigger than her, her head reaching only up to Gi Go's neck at most.

Gi Go reached out for the woman, but she ducked it, passing by him, only to

cough again and stop in her tracks, leaving her defenseless as Gi Go caught her and threw her back into bed.

“Don’t move. You’ll shorten your life,” Gi Go curtly said as he went back to his seat next to Yoshu.

“I thought it was odd back then... I guess she really was sick. A pity, but if not for that, my head probably wouldn’t be attached to my body anymore,” Gi GO said.

The woman watched Gi Go and Yoshu cautiously for a little longer, but after awhile, she lost consciousness and went back to sleep.

Gi Go quietly tucked the woman into bed, ensuring that the blanket warmed her, then he went back to sit next to Yoshu.

“Can you treat her?” Gi Go asked.

“Do I look like a doctor to you?” Yoshu asked back.

He didn’t bother asking what Gi Go would do if he did treat her. After all, Gi Go was simply the kind sort who would surely leave her alone afterwards.

As for Yoshu, he found it difficult to sleep knowing that someone who tried to kill them just moments ago was sleeping nearby, so he decided it would be best to get rid of her as soon as possible. In that way, he might be able to get his peaceful nights back.

“What herbs do you have?” Yoshu asked.

Gi Go showed him his stack, and Yoshu started picking out various herbs.



Yoshu sifted through various herbs, ground them into powder, mixing them with the evening primrose Gi Go gave him, then he dissolved the powder in hot water.

“This should do,” Yoshu said.

It was a simple mixture he learned from a traveling doctor once upon a time, though he did add some primrose into the original formula.

“Drink up,” Yoshu said as he poured the medicine into the sleeping

yugushiva's mouth.

After he heaved a breath of relief, Gi Go called out to him.

"Can she be saved?" He asked.

"I don't know, but the most we can do is to help stabilize her condition and then ensure she is fed well," Yoshu said.

A safe answer so to speak. After that Yoshu moved away from the yugushiva woman.

"I see..." Gi Go said, falling into silence as he pondered for a moment, then he took his sword and headed out. "I'll go hunt for a bit."

"Take care," Yoshu said.

Gi Go nodded, then his figure vanished into the snow field. When he came back he had a bird in his hands.

"Will this do?" Gi Go asked.

"More than," Yoshu said.

Yoshu quickly prepared the bird, gutting out its innards, then washing it with water from melted snow, then cooking it quickly over fire.

When the bird had charred a little on the surface, Yoshu chopped it and served it with boiled herbs. He placed the yugushiva's portion next to her.

"I'm sure she'll eat when she gets hungry. It would be best to eat while hot though," Yoshu said as he moved away from the yugushiva.

"Shall we?" Yoshu said to Gi Go.

Gi Go nodded, and the two of them began eating.

When night came they left the cave and practiced singing. When they came back the plate they left beside the yugushiva had been licked clean.

Yoshu wryly smiled as he took back the plate. This continued for six more days when the yugushiva was finally able to stand on her own.

"Feeling better?" Gi Go asked.

"...Food, thank you," the yugushiva woman said in broken speech.

Gi Go and Yoshu glanced at each other at that.

“You know our tongue?” Yoshu asked.

“South, words, a little,” she said.

The yugushiva, who had her silver hair in a ponytail, bowed before Gi Go and Yoshu.

“I have, request,” she said.

“A request?” Yoshu asked.

The woman nodded. “Medicine, give. Save, tribe.”

Gi Go and Yoshu glanced at each other again.

“What miraculous medicine did you give her?” Gi Go asked with visible admiration.

Yoshu honestly shook his head to indicate she must’ve been mistaken. “It was just a simple medicine. You could find it any—”

Suddenly, realization struck Yoshu. He did add an extra ingredient, didn’t he?

“Could it be because of this?” Yoshu muttered to himself as he looked at the yet fresh evening primrose.

“Please, give, save, tribe!” The woman desperately pleaded as she prostrated herself before them, her head touching the ground.

“What do we do?” Yoshu asked.

“Give it. I can’t get sick anyway,” Gi Go reasoned.

“Hmm...”

After thinking for a while, Yoshu took the bag of herbs and gave it to the woman.

“Unfortunately, this is all I have. I’m not sure how big your tribe is, but it probably won’t be enough,” Yoshu said slowly to make it easier for the woman to understand.

A look of despair gradually covered the woman’s face.

“So, how about you take me and Mr. Gi Go to your village, then we could

make more medicine there. How about it?” Yoshu suggested.

“Thank, you,” the woman said with much difficulty.

Yoshu wryly smiled.

“Did you catch my tendency for meddling with people?” Gi Go asked.

Yoshu scratched his head. “Umm... do you mind if we go?”

“Nah, let’s,” Gi Go smiled.

Yoshu narrowed his eyes.

Intermission: Thousand Li to the North, Embrace the Dawn II

Status	
Name	Gi Go Amatsuki
Race	Goblin
Level	2
Class	Duke; Wandering Swordsman
Possessed Skills	Sword Mastery A-; Purple Flash; Forsake; Sense; A Master Swordsman's Proof; Silent Nature; Veteran
Divine Protection	Sword God
Attributes	None
Abnormal Status	Sworn to Spare; Sword God's Control

The yugushiva woman’s name was Yustia.

The way she looked with the demon mask on made even Yoshu, who knew much about society, gulp.

The yugushiva had long silver hair that extended down to her waist. She quickly recovered after eating the food Gi Go had hunted.

The bright light of the sun illuminated the snowy lands as a cold breeze fluttered the yugushiva’s silver hair.

As she felt the breath of the snow god on her cheeks, she turned to her benefactors.

“Village, here,” she said.

Yustia pointed at a location between the valleys, where a village that looked almost as if it were buried in the snow was. If Yustia hadn't been with them, finding it would have surely been difficult.

Yustia led the pair of human and goblin to the biggest house.

Yoshu noted the children playing in the square. The game they played, however, was a duel of swords, a game which both young boys and girls played together. While some fought some jeered as they watched.

They were happy to see Yustia, but when they saw Yoshu and Gi Go – people they did not know – they pointed their swords at them.

“Kids playing with swords... I guess it's about what you'd expect from the yugushiva,” Yoshu said.

“Hmm? But goblins are the same...” Gi Go said.

“It's not normal for humans,” Yoshu pointed out.

“I see,” Gi Go nodded.

Gi Go and Yoshu talked nonchalantly despite having swords pointed at them. Meanwhile, Yustia told the children off in the northern language while she led Yoshu and Gi Go to the biggest house.

As they neared the house, a child ran into it. After which, a one-armed man in the prime of his life came out.

“Chief,” Yustia said. The words that came after that were all in the northern language.

She spoke to the chief about the matter of these people saving her as well as the medicine. She managed to let Gi Go and Yoshu understand what they were talking about through gestures.

The silver-haired man in the prime of his life made a difficult face. The wrinkles in between his brows deepened as the scars on his skin showed. There

were few men in the world who fit the image of a veteran as much as he.

Yustia and the man she referred to as chief talked for a bit, then she went into the house with Gi Go and Yoshu.

“Medicine, please,” Yustia said.

Yustia led Gi Go and Yoshu into the big house and into what was probably a bedroom.

On the canopy bed laid a woman who looked just like Yustia.

“My mother,” Yustia said.

The woman on the bed took ragged breaths. As soon as she heard Yustia’s voice, her eyes opened, and she turned a gentle gaze at her, but that gentleness quickly vanished when she turned to Yoshu and Gi Go.

The woman forcefully stabilized her breath and raised up her body. It was a mystery whether she simply did this out of pride or because she couldn’t forgive outsiders.

Yustia took a step forward and spoke with her mother. Seeing that, Gi Go and Yoshu turned around to give them some space, but Yustia’s mother called out to them.

“Get out of this village, you animals...” She said weakly in the southern tongue.

“You speak our tongue?” Yoshu asked.

Yustia’s mother glared at them. “I have... married twice in my life. And both were killed by your people... I will never forgive you.”

She spoke hatefully as tears flowed out of her eyes, then she turned her back on them. After that Yoshu and Gi Go exited the room to prepare the medicine, leaving Yustia to speak with her mother.

“Marriage, is that something important?” Gi Go asked.

“Well, some people see it as something sacred, so I guess it depends on the person. I’ve never been married and I don’t particularly want to right now, so... I don’t know,” Yoshu said.

Gi Go and Yoshu chatted while the latter made the medicine. Gi Go, who came from Gi Village, found it difficult to understand what marriage was.

“In other words, it’s to form a mate,” Gi Go said.

“Well, yes. I mean it’s natural to want to leave behind a descendant, right?” Yoshu said.

“I have only one body, and it belongs to none but I. I would say the same to others as well. What good is there in leaving behind one’s own lineage?” Gi Go asked.

Hmm... Yoshu became thoughtful for a moment, then he thought of using Gi Go’s king as an example.

“Well, what about your king then? Don’t you think it would be bad if there was no one left to succeed him?” Yoshu asked.

“...The king’s greatness has nothing to do with his blood or lineage. He is great because of his own abilities and achievements not because of his blood,” Gi Go answered.

“Then what will happen to your kingdom when the king passes? Who will take the throne?” Yoshu asked.

“Another excellent individual obviously,” Gi Go said matter-of-factly.

Why do you say it as if it’s so obvious? Yoshu thought to himself. It was true that there was no guarantee to an excellent king’s descendant being as skilled as he, but it was human to hope such things. It was precisely because of that the human kingdoms have lasted as long as they have...

After mixing the medicine, Yoshu handed the medicine to Yustia. Apparently, several persons’ helping would be needed, so he decided to concoct some more.

With nothing to do, Gi Go decided to take a tour of the yugushiva village.

Gi Go walked to that square they passed by a while ago. The children from before were still playing.

When Gi Go saw that he approached them.

The children did not know him, so they pointed their swords at him.

“Hmm...”

In response, Gi Go drew his sword.

The younger of the children cowered when they saw his bared sword, but the slightly older kids took stance. They lowered their hips, ready to jump at a moment's noticed.

“Good stance,” Gi Go said.

The children were probably playing, though, as they took whatever stance they felt like.

“Let me give you some pointers,” Gi Go said with a fierce smile as the children formed a semi-circle before him.

The younger children seemed to finally calmed down upon seeing the older of them step out. They took stance as well and prepared to charge at Gi Go together.

The pressure they emanated was quite impressive considering they were children.

“leeAaa!” One child cried out with fighting spirit as he charged at Gi Go, but Gi Go deflected his sword, sending it flying into the ground behind him. At the same time, Gi Go pointed his sword at him.

In the next moment, the children around Gi Go came charging too.

Gi Go deflected their swords one after another.

Some of the children were scared to death, some even cried... The crying children, Gi Go patted on the head to comfort them while he gave them back their swords, then he gestured to teach them that they should lower their hips more and faced their opponents straightforwardly. It took a while, but Gi Go managed to get his intentions across.

There was little fun to be had in the snow-caged village, so as soon as the children realized that Gi Go was no danger, their interests were piqued and they flocked around him like he was some sort of attraction.

Some found the color of his skin curious, while some tried pinching his hard skin, and others dangled from his great stature.

Gi Go had never seen so many human children before. The most he knew of were the few present in the Gi Village back when the humans still lived among them. Back then he also gave the willful children a few pointers.

Gi Go didn't know what to do with all the children, so he just let the flow take him and he played with them.

"Hmm," Gi Go muttered to himself.

This is not how things were supposed to go, he thought, but in the end, he couldn't help but play with the children until sunset.

Gi Go went back a little exhausted to the chief's house.

Gi Go and Yoshu stayed in the yugushiva village for the next 10 days.

Yoshu's medicine gradually helped the village overcome the dark cloud of illnesses that covered it, illuminating a ray of hope into the village.

Yoshu concocted his medicine day after day, while Gi Go would go out to play with the children and hunt.

One day, Yustia's mother visited them.

"I'm sorry for my behavior the other day," she said while Yustia quietly kept her head bowed. It seems it was her mother that had business with them.

"Thank you for saving my tribe," Yustia's mother said. "I thought of giving you something as thanks in return, but this is a village out in the sticks, after all, so... If it's not too much trouble, may I first know what reason you came to this village?"

Gi Go and Yoshu glanced at each other. This woman's behavior had changed so suddenly, but no matter how much they looked at her face, it seemed just like a block of ice, emotionless and unchanging.

She must've come to ascertain our intentions, Yoshu thought as he answered her. "This person here is Mr. Gi Go. He is a swordsman who has traveled away

from home to hone his skills.”

Yoshu explained that they came here after hearing tales of the yugushiva’s skill with the sword, and that they hoped to have a duel with one of their esteemed swordsmen.

A troubled look faintly surfaced on Yustia’s mother. She turned to Yustia, but she was wholeheartedly looking at Gi Go and Yoshu.

Sighing, she spoke. “Our tribe is indeed better with the sword compared to the flatlanders of the south, but unfortunately, the men of our tribe have either passed or been gravely wounded. All that’s left of our tribe now are children and women.”

Indeed, whenever Gi Go took a walk around the village, he felt there was too many children compared to the men.

“But Ms. Yustia is—” Yoshu said.

“This girl is still a child. Someone who only knows how to flail about with brute strength isn’t an adult,” she said.

“Please let us think a bit,” Yoshu said.

Gi Go and Yoshu made a difficult face as they became thoughtful. Meanwhile, Yustia and her mother excused themselves.

“What should we do?” Yoshu asked.

Yoshu felt they were indirectly being asked to leave.

“If there’s nothing they can give us, we should go,” Gi Go said. “There might be something else to these lands, who knows.”

The two spent time gathering their thoughts, but in the end, they couldn’t come up with another answer.

The next day, they decided to leave and return to the king. Yoshu had always intended to return after a year and Gi Go himself would rather see the king again if he had nowhere else to go.

After preparing their luggage, the two immediately left the village. The village kids that Gi Go have been playing with all this time saw them off. The kids were

in low spirits now that Gi Go was leaving, so Gi Go patted them each on the head before going his way.

After a day's walk from the yugushiva village, Gi Go and Yoshu made camp along the path Yustia had taught them under the shade of a large tree. But just when Gi Go was about to go hunt as usual, a voice called out to him, stopping him in his tracks.

“Lord Gi Go!”

That was Yustia's voice. As soon as Gi Go heard it, he left the thickets from which he hid, and waved at her. Like an arrow released, Yustia came running to Gi Go. She didn't even have the yugushiva mask her tribe usually wore. She had only the white overcoat on her body as she ran into Gi Go's arms.

“Sorry, sorry, mother, lied,” Yustia apologized repeatedly in ragged breaths.

Gi Go thought it would be best to get Yoshu's advice, so he brought her to their camp for the time being.

As it turns out, Yustia's mother was telling only half the story. It was true that most of the men of their tribe had indeed died in the war last year, and that the strongest remaining in their village were either Yustia herself or her mother, but it was not true that they had no methods to help one train in the sword.

Yustia wanted to thank them for saving their village, a thought her mother sympathized with, but being unable to speak the southern tongue well, her mother proposed to be the ones to talk to Gi Go and Yoshu in her place. Naturally, being unskilled with the tongue, Yustia couldn't fully understand what they have been talking about, and so, she thought that her mother had properly explained, but when she heard from the children the afternoon yesterday that Gi Go and Yoshu had left, she approached her mother.

—“Why did you lie?” She asked with a fury like that of raging flames.

—“The secret methods of our tribe can't be leaked to outsiders!” Her mother reasoned.

—“It is disgraceful not to thank one's benefactors! Which do you think our ancestors would cry over more? Being unable to protect our secrets or leaving a debt unpaid!?” Yustia said back.

The argument between mother and daughter grew so heated that in the end they ended up drawing swords and the villagers had to step in to quell their fighting. After that Yustia fled her village and went after Gi Go.

“That was really reckless,” Yoshu muttered.

“Lord Gi Go, want to be strong, there is place,” Yustia said with her head deeply bowed. “I guide you! Pay debt!”

“Thank you,” Gi Go returned her deep bow.



Yustia led Gi Go and Yoshu to a snow cave two days away from the shade of the tree where they made camp.

The light outside reflected off the countless icicles within the cave, illuminating its interiors. It was a magical sight so breathtaking that Gi Go and Yoshu forget the cold for a moment.

“Alone, meet, god,” Yustia said.

The cave didn’t seem that deep. Gi Go did as Yustia instructed, and he entered the cave alone.

“Sing, songs. God, likes, songs,” Yustia said.

Gi Go never thought the songs he’d learned would be used this way, but he did as Yustia instructed and started singing.

“My dance, is the spark of blades, intoxicated by the moon. When I dance, the gods descend, and the evening birds cry forever in the night. (Baabaiyaado, baazarukushu, vadimaav. Paapaiyaaru, kaamuuru, janruuruu, Nuenakudooru.)”

Gi Go chose to sing a battle song.

He thought it would be most fitting considering where they were.

As he sung, countless magic formations of various geometrical shapes appeared beneath his feet, and then, his body vanished.

Gi Go found himself alone in the dark.

The weight of his curve sword sheathed by his waist and the sensation of his feet on the ground never left, but Gi Go’s body had definitely sank in the

darkness.

A normal person would probably be in a panic after being thrown into the darkness all of the sudden, but an experienced warrior such as Gi Go calmly sat down and analyzed his current situation.

“Is this the trial of the yugushiva?” Gi Go muttered to himself.

A person who overcomes a trial will gain great power.

It was such a trial that the yugushiva referred to as their secret method.

“This sure is dark, though,” Gi Go muttered.

It was indeed dark considering he thought it dark despite having goblin eyes that could see in the night. After a while, a faint shadow appeared.

Gi Go concentrated his attention on his eyes to ensure that he wasn't just seeing things. As he did that shadow sat in the same way he did.

“A trial, huh,” Gi Go muttered.

“Yes, a trial,” the shadow replied.

Not wanting to show timidity, Gi Go stood up, and the shadow stood at the same time. Gi Go and the shadow both drew their swords.

“So all I have to do is to cut you?” Gi Go asked.

“If you can, that is,” the shadow sneered.

There was no need for further talk. Gi Go grasped his drawn sword tight.

Gi Go leaped at the shadow.

The shadow leaped as well, and with the exact same timing, their swords clashed and locked.

Now point blank each other, Gi Go couldn't help but note the face of this figure. When he did he was awestruck.

“Who are you!?” Gi Go asked.

That face was without a doubt the Goblin King's.

But this figure was not the Goblin King but an imitator. For some reason, it had taken the exact figure of the king when he was still a duke class.

“I am the god within you,” the shadow said.

“Lies!” Gi Go spat.

Gi Go pushed against this mysterious foe once more, forcing a small opening, which he used to swing his curved sword. But the shadow easily deflected his sword.

“Come! Cut the god within you! Cut that thing which you believe in! Come! Come!” The shadow beckoned as he slashed at Gi Go repeatedly.

His sword was sharp and heavy. Gi Go could not relax for even a moment lest he wished to die. The pressure was overwhelming.

The shadow pressured Gi Go, closing the gap he’d forced open. Gi Go tried to fight back, but the shadow pushed his sword away and neared him. Being too near, Gi Go could not cut the shadow properly.

“Ku!?” Gi Gu groaned.

“What’s wrong!? Weren’t you going to cut me!? Well, cut! Cut cut cut cut cut cut cut!!”

Again, Gi Go found his sword locked with this foe. He ignored the shadow’s words as he sought a path to victory.

—Cut, I have to cut it, but how!?

The enemy’s attacks were strong and unrelenting. If he let his guard down for even a moment, his head would surely be lopped off.

Somehow, he was able to keep the fight at a standstill, but Gi Go knew he was walking a thin line.

“You are not my king. I have only one king and he is in the south!” Gi Go said.

Fueled by rage, Gi Go slammed his fist at the shadow’s face, then with the opened distance, he swung his curved sword, but unfortunately, Gi Go hit nothing but the air.

He looked for the shadow.

“Ka ka ka ka ka!”

The shadow’s laughter resounded within the darkness, but it also echoed,

making it difficult for Gi Go to pinpoint the shadow's exact location.

Suddenly, Gi Go felt the back of his neck numb, so trusting his instincts, he immediately slid his body.

"Ke!"

As soon as he did, the shadow's curved sword came thrusting from behind him, grazing his neck.

"OOoO!"

Gi Go turned his body and swung his sword at the shadow's stretched arm, but the shadow managed to pull it back, leaving Gi Go with nothing to hit but the air. Regardless, Gi Go had managed to buy some time.

Gi Go fixed his stance and calculated the distance to the shadow, then he stepped forward and matched the timing of the shadow. Gi Go had his curved sword wielded by his side as he swung it against the shadow's sword. As their swords clashed, Gi Go rammed his body into the shadow, hoping to send it flying, but his attempt was only met with an airy sensation. As it turns out, he could not even slam his body into the shadow.

"Ku!?" Gi Go groaned.

"What's wrong!? What's wrong!? Weren't you going to cut me!? Well!? Cut me! Cut! Cut!" The shadow mocked him as it swung its sword.

When Gi Go blocked one attack, another would come from the opposite direction. Under the endless tempest of swords, Gi Go was left completely on the defensive.

This shadow was clearly more skilled at the sword.

The shadow's sword was like flowing water that never stopped like a waterfall.

Gi Go endured that onslaught of attacks as he pondered to himself.

Yustia told him before that the trial was a battle with one's self.

—Can I really cut this shadow?

This was not the king.

Gi Go knew that, but was this not the king within him? If so, would this not be the very incarnation of the king which he believed in? That very king who raised Gi Go from a simple goblin into who he was today? That benefactor who saved him and his tribe from starvation? That great king who holds such great ambitions as to dare fight the humans?

Yes, this was indeed the very king which he wished to serve.

Could he cut the king?

—No! He absolutely could not!

“Your sword is confused! Those whose path is uncertain deserve to die!” The shadow said as it rained sword after sword on Gi Go.

Somehow, Gi Go managed to fend the shadow off and take some distance.

“If I cut that which I believe in for what reason have I swung my sword?” Gi Go said, then he threw his curved sword behind him.

“Are you mad? You must be! Why else would you throw your sword!!” Furious, the shadow made a large overhead swing with its sword.

“My sword—”

The shadow’s sword was clearly slower than before.

Gi Go caught the shadow’s blade between his hands.

“—exists for the path I believe in!”

In the same moment Gi Go caught the shadow’s sword, he kicked the shadow away and its body vanished into the darkness.

Suddenly, the darkness faded and Yoshu and Yustia’s distant figures came to view.

As the darkness faded, the light of the moon reflected off the icicles within the cave, creating that same magical scenery he had seen awhile ago.

When Gi Go triumphantly smiled, he felt as if the shadow was laughing behind him.

After that Gi Go and Yoshu helped Yustia return to the yugushiva.

It wouldn't be until a few days later when they would begin their journey back to to the king.



Level has risen.

2 => 96

Sword Mastery A- => Sword Mastery A+

Purple Flash

—Can cut magic.

Acumen

—Attacks seen once can be dodged. The effect varies depending on level and class. (TL Note: This used to be Forsake, but only because I didn't really understand what it did. It is now Acumen as insight is already taken.)

Sense

—Focusing one's spirit makes it possible to detect nearby enemies.

Discern

—The experience once has gathered will allow one to predict and dodge an enemy's next attack.

A Swordsman's Proof

—Prevents confusion.

Silent Nature

—When fighting an enemy in a one-on-one duel, agility, concentration, strength, and ether are all increased.

The abnormal status, Sword God's Control, has been relieved.

The condition, Sword God's Blessing, has been added!

Due to the Sword God's Blessing:

- Sword skill is raised.
- The skill bonus will be applied even when using other types of swords.
- It is also now possible to use ether to sharpen one's sword.

Chapter 155: Paradise is a Long Way Away

Status

Race	Goblin
Level	92
Class	King; Ruler
Possessed Skills	Ruler of the Demon Children of Chaos; Defiant Soul; World Devouring Howl; Sword Mastery A-; Dominator; King’s Soul; Ruler’s Wisdom III; Household of the Gods; One-Eyed Snake’s Evil Eye; The King's Dance at the Edge of Death; Magic Manipulation; Soul of the Berserk King; Third Impact (The Third Chant); Warrior's Instinct; Blessing of the Underworld Goddess; Guided One
Divine Protection	Goddess of the Underworld (The goddess)
Attributes	Darkness; Death
Subordinate Beasts	High Kobold Hasu (Lv77); Gastra (Lv20); Cynthia (Lv1); Orc King (Bui) (Lv82)
Abnormal Status	Blessing of the One-Eyed Snake; Protection of the Twin-Headed Snake

There was only one month left until the war with the humans. Various weapons and armor have been prepared, and the goblin soldiers’ training have been going smoothly. We’ve also managed to increase food production and have also began cultivating the red fruits which even the goblins should be able to eat.

Although goblin diet still largely revolved around meat, at the very least, we no longer relied solely on hunting.

There’s not much that can be done about the goblins’ taste, so I’ll just have to order them to add fruits and grains to their diet.

Personally, I don’t think they taste good either, but it’s necessary, so I eat them anyway.

Naturally, I couldn’t be the only one to eat only meat, so I had to start incorporating the new menu into my own diet first.

As a result, goblin diet gradually changed. It’s not so easily accomplished,

however, so we'll have to take things step by step.

As the day of war approached, I gathered the elven reinforcements and the demihumans to the frontlines, namely the ones that specialized in war, such as Mido of the Fang Tribe, Nikea of the Araneae, and Kerodotos of the minotaurs.

On the side of the elves, Fei, who has been going back and forth the village and me, arrived with Princess Shunaria, an old elven friend, and some familiar goblins.

"Long time no see, Your Majesty!" Leader of the druids, Gi Za Zakuend, said.

"It's been a while, Your Highness!" Kuzan, who had left for the elven school, said.

"Was it worth it?" I asked.

"Of course! I will definitely be of help to you, Your Majesty!" Gi Za said proudly with his arms folded.

"I have learned much about herbs, so just leave the wounded to me!" Kuzan said cheerfully as she jumped up and down.

I nodded. "Good, I'll be expecting much from you. But for now rest up. We'll talk after."

I called out to Gi Do Buruga, who was behind Gi Za. "You too, Gi Do."

"Thank you, Your Majesty," he said with an elegant bow.

His manners were so graceful that I went wide-eyed for a moment. Who would've thought a goblin could become so... graceful? It seems there really is a lot we have to learn from the elves.

Everyone came back better than before, but battle-wise, the one with the greatest results was none other than Cynthia.

A peek at her status through the one-eyed snake's evil eye showed just how much she had grown. Moreover, because she was subordinated to me, I could see that some wolves were also subordinated to her.

She was also no longer an adult but a wild beast. I can't imagine just how much blood she must have shed to grow so much...

“Father,” Cynthia said.

I was shocked, to say the least, but I didn’t forget to spoil her by rubbing her head. It seems she can now talk a little.

“Father,” Cynthia said again.

Unfortunately, the words she could speak were still too few. Regardless, it was clear that she enjoyed being rubbed. Her voice was still that of a little girl but the path she has walked was nothing to scoff at.

Status

Name	Cynthia
Race	Gray Wolf; Pack Commander; Wolf King's Successor
Level	68
Class	
Possessed Skills	Raging Gale Strike; Charge; Great Blood; Howl of the Beast King; King of the Plains; Ferocious Fangs; Wise Wolf
Divine Protection	Goddess of Wisdom
Attributes	None;
Status	Subordinated to the Goblin King
Subordinate Beasts	Red Wolf; Earth Wolf; Savage Dog

The skill, Wise Wolf, must be what allows us to understand each other.

“Welcome back, Cynthia. I’m glad to see you.”

I caressed Cynthia as she snuggled up to me.

Spoiling her from time to time should be fine.



One month before the war with the humans, the people that left to scout: Shumea, Selena, Pale, and Felbi returned.

The information they came back with made me doubt my ears.

A great civil war had begun among the free cities, and the leading actors were none other than the followers of the Kushain faith.

Apparently, the Kushain adherents of the northern city state, Cultidian, rallied the adherents from the other city states and marched east.

Because everything had happened so suddenly, one of the eastern city states fell.

The war was led by the patriarch himself, who called the war a holy war.

“Did you catch the name of that patriarch?” I asked.

Shumea was the one to answer that question. “If I recall correctly, it should be Benem Nemush.”

He actually became patriarch? I suppose strange things do happen, but on the other hand, having things progress so well leaves me uneasy.

Regardless, with this, the public order of the southern part of Germion Kingdom should worsen, crippling their ability to support the west.

Germion Kingdom has no way of knowing how far that so-called holy war will spread, so they shouldn’t be able to spread the south thin. When it comes to religious wars like these, the more zealous the adherents, the fiercer the fires of war will burn.

I don’t think all the believers would be as passionate as that man, but the more aggressive they become, the more refugees and deaths there will be.

This is a good opportunity for us.

As I thought that to myself, I suggested that Pale and the others rest.

“Umm... Do you mind if I ask for a favor?” Pale asked apologetically.

Nodding, I had the others go ahead. “That’s rare, coming from you.”

From the way I saw it, Pale seemed to have resolved herself. She seemed particularly tense.

“Please let me go to the human world one more time,” Pale said.

“Why?” I asked.

Pale gulped as she hesitatingly answered. “...For private reasons.”

“That’s what I want to know,” I said.

Pale shut her mouth tight as if she had been hit.

I quietly waited for her answer.

“I was an adventurer before. My comrades from back then seems to have found themselves in trouble, so...” Pale said.

“We are about to go to war with the western feudal lord of Germion Kingdom. You do understand that we need every man we can get, right?” I said.

Pale quietly nodded, and I thought about her proposal.

“First of all, what exactly do you want to do about these comrades of yours? Do you want to save them? If so, what will you do after you save them?” I asked.

Pale might be blind now, but I’m sure with her skills, she could still manage as an adventurer. According to Shumea, her blindness wasn’t really much of a deterrent.

“I would like to save them if I could,” Pale said.

“Go if you must, but I hope you’re not planning on going against us,” I said.

“But of course!” Pale said.

When she said ‘favor’, she was probably referring to Selena. I’m not keen on sending Pale out alone, but it can’t be helped.

It doesn’t seem like she’s just running away, though. After all, she could have just left without saying anything.

“Nothing bad will happen to Selena. Go in peace,” I said.

“Thank you,” Pale said.

Like that Pale left, and I went to where Selena and the others were.

Pale isn’t going to be around, so it seems I will have to rethink my plans.

“In 20 days, we shall march our forces into human territory.”

The gathered people stirred. That included the noble and duke class goblins,

as well as the orc king, Bui, the elves, and the various demihumans.

The gathered people looked at each other, then they looked up to the heavens.

When things began to settle down, I spoke. "I'm thinking of splitting our forces into 2 main groups. One group to surround the colonial city and another to deal with the enemy reinforcements."

Normally, we would move together, but without any siege weapons, we can't really attack the colonial city effectively.

With high walls occupied by archers and deep moats below which are beds of swords, it's simply too difficult to fight a straight-up battle. And even if we do try to force our way through, losing too many men will leave us too weak to stabilize the city. Worse, the reinforcements might end up just sweeping the floor with us altogether.

Fighting a battle with exhausted warriors against a group of vengeful humans is a situation I really don't want to imagine.

My end goal is to defeat the humans and create my own kingdom. My first step towards that goal is to defeat the western feudal lord and take his territory.

That being the case, the lifeline of the western region is not actually the colonial city itself, which is essentially a vanguard, but the western capital, their home base. The fall of the colonial city would mean little so long as the western capital is able to continue sending forces. They would just rebuild it as many times as they need. On the other hand, if I could destroy the west capital, supporting the colonial city would become a difficult endeavor, not just supply-wise but also in terms of morale.

Morale isn't an easy thing to keep up during extended periods of battle.

When people don't know when help is going to come, everyone is starving, and friends are hurt, the only thing that can really keep people together is hope for reinforcements. Without that hope the only thing left is defeat.

"...Are we only going to ignore the enemy in front of us?" The Orc King, Bui, asked in that unchanging timid fashion of his.

“We will be surrounding the colonial city to seal their movements. If the opportunity to destroy it presents itself, then by all means,” I said.

That being said, we would have to attack to some extent. We can’t just surround the colonial city and stare at them like scarecrows.

After all, we need to live up to our reputation as monsters. The more fearful and panicked they become, the quicker they will call for help.

We’ll try to limit our casualties as much as possible, but zero is impossible.

“The force that will be surrounding the colonial city will be led by Ra Gilmi Fishiga of the Ganra Tribe. Within the same force, Gi Gi Orudo will be leading the beast army; and then the araneae, the minotaurs, the tarpidae, the rizalat, and the papirsag along with the orc forces,” I said.

The force surrounding the colonial city will strike fear into the enemy while attacking them from a distance. There will also be a support team to distribute supplies. Frankly, it would be ideal if I could get Ganra and the beast army to break through, but unfortunately, the circumstances won’t permit it.

The mad lion, Gi Zu Ruo, has yet to return, so I’m unable to incorporate him into this force.

“Gi Gu Verbena will be leading the vanguard against the enemy’s main forces,” I said.

That is the reward I promised him for gathering the most subordinates among the goblins I’ve sent out. This honor is his.

“Our main force will have Gi Jii Yubu’s army, Gi Za Zakuend’s Druids, and the Gaidga Tribe,” I said.

Gi Jii Yubu’s army has been trained well to adapt to unexpected situations. Although not yet completed, his army is one of the few forces that actually act like an army as opposed to a horde. It would be a waste not to have them be a part of the main force.

The druids too. Magic is too great of a trump card to leave unused.

As for the Gaidga, they’re a tribe that specializes in brute force, so naturally they’ll be added too.

“The mobile unit will be handled by the Paradua Tribe, the centaurs, and the fang tribe.”

Naturally, it would be filled by those with the most mobility. That means the Paradua and their beast riders, the gray wolves and the werewolves, and the centaurs who make a living running through the plains.

“The rear guard will be filled by the elves, Gi Ga Rax’s imperial guards, and my own platoon.”

When worse comes to worse, the deciding pieces will be the ‘wounded ones’ who are more persistent than any other. I will be leading them personally as I want to decide when to send them.

“Gi Jii Arsil’s unit will be working alongside the harpies for reconnaissance.”

The reconnaissance mission, which has the greatest influence on the battle, will be handled by Gi Ji and Yushika. They will be ascertaining the enemy position from the sky and from the ground.

This is the formation I came up with that allows us to exhibit our mobility even while prioritizing damage.

There wasn’t anyone who excelled in defense, so I decided to just give the iron equipment to the vanguard.

“Our path to world domination begins with this war. Let the proud humans know the might and fury of our blades!”

With this our course has largely been decided. All that’s left now is to deal with the small details, such as the timing of the surround, when to break through the humans’ main force, and deciding the routes we will be taking up to the western capital.

The old goblin, Kuzan, and Yellow are in charge of dealing with the reserve force and those that will be left behind.

All the big players will be coming out in this battle.

We will use all the power of the Forest of Darkness to deal a mighty blow to the humans.



The goblins within the Fortress of the Abyss were as busy as bees due to the coming war. Of the busied people in the fortress, one person was on her way away. It was none other than Pale.

She hadn't said goodbye to anyone even Selena.

"Are you going?" Felbi asked.

The only one sending her off was her comrade in arms, Felbi.

"Sorry. I'm not scared that the elves have chosen to walk with the goblins. It's just that..." Pale said.

"I know. There are things we can't abandon. Even if we want to, it's not easy," Felbi wryly smiled.

He looked young on the surface, but he had already put on many years.

He rarely showed this side to him.

In response, Pale looked down on the ground. "Felbi, I..."

"You don't have to say anything," Felbi said. "Even if you worry, no one's going to die."

All of the sudden, Felbi was back to that jovial attitude of his, keeping Pale from saying anything more.

"The problem with you is you're too serious," Felbi said. "You should live more selfishly from time to time. No one would blame you."

"Felbi..." Pale said.

"Live as you wish, Pale. That's why you left in the first place, right? When you come back, we'll accept you, and even if you end up fighting against us, I won't blame you. That's what veraltas (comrade in arms) are for, right?" Felbi said.

Right, Pale said as a tear leaked from her closed eyes.

"Thank you, Veralta (Comrade in arms)," Pale said.

"Don't call me that right to my face. It's embarrassing!" Felbi scratched his head.

Pale bid farewell to Felbi.



Within the morning haze surrounding the Fortress of the Abyss was the mighty coalition army consisting of the goblins, the demihumans, and the elves.

There were 10 days left until the appointed day of the Goblin King. They would have to send an advance party to begin the war, so considering the time, they had no other opportunity to meet up together except for this.

A large black body with a lone horn on his head reaching for the heavens and a tail that slammed against the ground... On his body, he wore a set of leather armor and an overcoat made from the pelt of a red-speckled bear. Two great swords were sheathed by his waist. He seemed to be the very embodiment of power.

On his right arm was a symbol of a coiled snake blacker than the tone of his skin, and on his left hand was the blessing he received from the twin-headed snake. His features were miles away compared to any goblin.

That goblin climbed up a hill, and with his red eyes, looked down beneath him.

“On this fated day, we shall change history!”

At his voice, the heavens trembled and the earth quivered. His majestic presence bore so strongly upon the goblins that they were forced to kneel.

His voice was like the very act of rebellion against the heavens itself. The Goblin King bellowed at the morning sky.

“You who have lost your homes to the humans!”

The demihumans looked zealously at the king.

“You who have lost the war for supremacy!”

The elves clenched their fists.

“You who have been hunted as monsters!”

The goblins could not contain their emotions as they waited for the king’s words.

“Our paradise is a long way away. We cannot even see its silhouette, but... No

matter how steep the path, one day, we will find it. To us godless ones (goblins), divine protections are worthless; therefore, without any prayer, with only the might of our unrelenting wills... we shall crush the human race!"

The Goblin King raised his fist toward the heavens.

"Defeated one! Let the proud humans taste our might!"

With a howl the whole forest shook.



Legend:

(Note: If you see anything amiss, please let me know. I couldn't read some kanji because of the image quality and the handwriting.)

- 1. Unexplored Forest of Darkness land.
- 2. Sylph HQ
- 3. Unexplored Forest of Darkness Land
- 4. Demihuman HQ
- 5. Gi Zu's Territory
- 6. Fortress of the Abyss
- 7. Gi Gu Verbena's Territory
- 8. Gi Gi's Territory

9. Orc HQ

10. New Orc HQ

Red text. Gi Go's Travel Route